

FOURTEEN
EVANGELICAL SERMONS,

PREACHED IN THE
CHURCH OF THE UNITED PARISHES
OF
ST. MARGARET PATTEMS,
AND
ST. GABRIEL FENCHURCH.

BY THE REV. THOMAS WEBSTER,
LECTURER.

He that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD.

1 COR. I. 31.

PRINTED FOR, AND SOLD BY THE AUTHOR, NO. 20,
GRANGE-ROAD, BERMONDSEY.

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PREACHED IN THE

CHURCH OF THE UNITED PARISHES

OF

ST. MARGARET, PATERNOSTER

AND

ST. CLAUDE, LONDON



BY THE REV. THOMAS WEBSTER

LECTURER

His text, Genesis, 1st chapter, 1st verse.

LONDON

PRINTED FOR, AND SOLD BY THE AUTHOR, NO. 10,

ST. MARK'S LANE, LONDON.

To my kind Friends the Parishioners
of the united Parishes of St. Mar-
garet Pattens, and St. Gabriel
Fenchurch.

DEARLY BELOVED,

MOTIVES of gratitude have induced me to address to you this my labour of love: For some considerable time I have been obliged to you, under Providence, for a partial mean of support to a burthen-some family—What lies before you has been already, I trust, not ineffectually recommended to your serious attention from the Pulpit—I now labour to disseminate, through a different channel; the important truths I once before brought forward; should I have reason to conclude, the present mode of their conveyance, is, in any wise, blessed to a single soul, however I may have preached, I shall receive ample testimony that I have not printed in vain.

*I am your faithful well wisher in
Jesus,*

T. WEBSTER.

ERRATA.

In page 72, line 28, for *fear* read *feared*.

In page 160, line 21, for *led* read *held*.

SERMON I.

I EPIST. CORINTH. CHAP. I. PART OF VER. 31.

HE THAT GLORIETH, LET HIM GLORY IN THE
LORD.

MEN and Brethren, the Apostle to the Corinthians is not contented with bringing forward, as it were, simply his own authority, but upholds the important doctrine, he wishes to maintain in your consciences, with this preface—*According as it is written*; so that not singly by the truth of the sentiment itself, are we encouraged to adopt the advice of the Apostle, but from its general agreement with the principal documents of various parts of the sacred writings themselves: This is as much as if he had addressed you thus, Do not receive what I assert, barely on my authority (for in so doing, perhaps were I mistaken, you would embrace any falsity I might assert), but search and see into the word of God

B

itself

itself, and you shall soon discover, through that medium, in conjunction with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, whether "I speak of God, " or whether I speak of myself."

The words to which St. Paul appears to have referred, are written in the 9th chapter of the Prophecy of Jeremiah, and in the 23d and 24th verses—they are as follow: "Thus saith the " Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his " might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; " but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that " he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am " the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, " judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for " in these things I delight, saith the Lord!" Indeed, the latter clauses of the chapter, from whence my text is taken, seem to bear a vast affinity to the quotation I have just read to you, extracted from the Prophet, "Not many wise," says the Apostle, "not many mighty, not many " noble are called, but God hath chosen the " foolish things of the world, to confound the " mighty;" and, after going on in the same sort of strain for a little time longer, he adjoins, that God hath adopted this line of conduct, "that " no flesh should glory in his presence," and presently winds up the whole of the argument, with the words of the text, "He that glorieth, " let

"let him glory in the Lord!" By the term Lord, it is abundantly evident, from the context, as well as from the whole scope of the Scriptures, that the Lord Jesus is intended; that Lord with whom the Christian has more immediately to do: God out of him is a consuming fire: hence there appears the necessity of revealed religion; for how could mere human nature itself have become acquainted with the knowledge of a Mediator, in whom it could have access with the Father? O may we never seek to have to do with an absolute God, or, like Cain, bring to him the productions of the ground; the works of mere dust and ashes as a propitiation for our sins! If the altar was not to be erected of hewn stone, least by laying a tool upon it, it should be polluted, surely the altar must be of such importance, that the gift, singly of itself, must be unhallowed.

The Apostle hath elsewhere observed, that God included all the world, both Jew and Gentile, under sin; and is this a cause of boasting? shall we glory in our shame? shall we boast, that we all die in Adam, and that by one man's transgression sin fell upon us all? Surely this would be a kind of boasting no where to be expected within the limits of common sense. But what then? have we no just occasion of exultation? has the Christian

no laudable cause of triumph? yes, blessed be God; " Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord " hath done it; break forth into singing, O " earth, for the Lord hath done it;" he hath afforded us a sufficient reason for our mirth; " what the law could not do, in that it was " weak through the flesh, God sent his own " son in the likeness of sinful flesh; and for " sin, condemned sin in the flesh" of his son; and thus Christ is become, to the truly converted Christian, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; that, according as it is written, " He that glorieth, let him glory " in the Lord!" Even so we *preach*, it will be your happiness and my occasion of rejoicing, if I can add, so ye have *believed*.

From what has been observed, the nothingness of the boastings of those men is sufficiently apparent; who, like the Pharisee of old, are thanking God, that they are not as other men are; not thanking him with an humility of soul, that he hath made them, and he only in Christ, to differ from another; for the Pharisee, in the Gospel, had never come to Christ, this done he had been no Pharisee; but do you think the term Pharisee, is alone applicable to the Jewish persuasion? Alas, my brethren, how many are there, in the present day, of the same temperament; how many who conceit that they possess a righteousness

ousness of their own, and despise not only others, but that righteousness of another;—that extraneous or vicarious righteousness, in which only we and they can be accepted of God.

Are there none before me who are ready to exclaim, well I did not so and so, as such an one has done; I had always too deep a sense of my own character and importance in life: but, my friends, is this a reason which you dare to bring as a certificate to your title to an eternal inheritance, when God shall summon your souls to judgment? Where, shew me where such an excuse is authorised by the sanction of God's word? "Though I gave
" my body to be burned," says our Apostle,
" and had not charity," that is to say, the love of Christ shed abroad in my heart by faith, " it would profit me nothing." Where then is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world? such look little further than a little natural religion, in which they are supported, and even anticipated by heathens: but such religion as this, what comfort can it administer to the soul which feels, and is aware that it is a sinner, obnoxious to the wrath of God? Can the ideas this soul entertains of God's sovereignty, do other than terrify it? The purity, the omniscience, and the omnipotence, of the divine Being, can
they

they be other against it, than that flaming sword, which is to defend the ingress into paradise? hence then is made manifest the abundant mercy of God, in that he permits any of you to exult, and glory in the Lord, in the God-Man, whom he has provided, as your mediator, who are enabled to apprehend him by faith. Surely then, the knowledge and apprehension of this rich provision, made doubtless for some of you, can be deemed, by those who feel themselves interested in it, no less than their crown of rejoicing; the top stone of their felicity. Souls of this complexion, can exultingly exclaim, In the Lord Jesus have I righteousness and strength: HE, even HE, is the strength of my life, and shall be my portion for ever; in *him*, after the example of holy David, will I make my boast: I will make mention of thy righteousness only! Souls thus feeling, and triumphing in their own weakness, may then, according to Paul, and even their own experience, be denominated strong; because they not only feel where lies their weakness and insufficiency, but they know where their strength is, and where they can successfully apply for succour.

If I am to glory in the Lord, surely I have no right to make my boast of any thing else; the Apostle is express, "Let him that
" glorieth,

"glorieth, glory in the Lord!" "I am willing to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified." "Whether we live, we should live to the Lord; or whether we die, we should die unto the Lord; that whether we live, or die, we may be the Lord's." Surely the Apostle Paul, whose epistles may be considered as a key of the Scriptures, himself having been transported into the third heaven, has, in the three first chapters to the Corinthians, culled every flower out of the Gospel garden, and presented to his correspondents and to us, a truly valuable and Evangelical nosegay. How does he, in the third chapter, endeavour to pull down all human importance, that Christ alone may be exalted; "other foundation can no man lay, but Jesus:" "Ye," adds he, in the conclusion, "are Christ's, and Christ is God's:" hence then, you derive whatever title you can shew to heaven and happiness, that Christ is God's: not that you have any ability or claim virtually in yourselves, no, ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The members must repose with the head; Christ being the beloved, they who are his, are also to be, or rather are accepted in the beloved.

Now, my dear friends, we are arrived at the important task; it remains, that we enquire, whether this Christ be ours, so that we can make,

make, with authority, our boast of him all the day long, and casting all our care upon him, make mention of his righteousness only. The Scripture hath laid down an infallible rule, Hereby we know that we are his, by his spirit which he hath given us: Does the same mind dwell in you which was also in Christ Jesus; that is to say, are you willing to be esteemed of no reputation, to avoid every occasion of exultation in your own proper persons, and to permit Christ to be your all in all? Can you say, when commended for your acquirements, or proffered any temporal advantage, O Christ, give thou but thyself, and these, only as they are good and convenient for my eternal welfare, as they are conducive to thine honor, as I shall, through Grace, be enabled to employ them to thy glory, as they may become means of propagating thy munificence, and love towards me, by exciting diligence in me to tell forth to those who fear God, or are hereafter, by thy mercy, designed to sit at the feet of Jesus, what God in Christ has done for my soul! Such I am well persuaded, would be the language of David; and shall Christians in the present day, affecting to entertain the same hope, be far behind him in their grateful expressions of spiritual joy!

And now to bring the matter home to you, is Christ formed in you the hope of glory?

If

If this is already done, you will feel a peculiar suavity and propriety in the text; you will know yourselves to be interested in it, and it will speak for you one portion of your daily experience: If this be the case, happy are ye who have the Lord, the Lord Jesus for your God! I need not repeat it to you, you know yourselves to be highly favoured: Be careful then, that you live up to your privileges; Oh manifest to the world, that there is something in your beloved, more than in another's beloved; Let not only saints, but scoffers also observe that you have been with Jesus; but beware after all, that you do not deceive yourselves; Is the conviction really impressed on your souls that you are Christ's? Does the Spirit in reality witness with your spirit that you are the children of God? You will then be careful to maintain good works, and that upon a sanctified principle; that your faith be not evil spoken of. You have begun to attribute all things to Christ with thanksgiving, and you are thence taught to look up to him for every support: You are possessed of the import of his own words, without me ye can do nothing; and are thence led to pray, O Lord, work thou all our works in us, so shall they be made manifest that they are wrought in God; thou hast become my wisdom, for it is to thee I owe whatever I am spiritually

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taught

taught to know ; to thee I am indebted for apprehensions of mine own folly, ignorance, and weakness ; thus art thou my wisdom ; but thou hast not left me here ; thou art my righteousness ; in thee have I righteousness ; I make mention of thy righteousness only ; thou hast wrought out an everlasting righteousness, and it is of thy mercy and kindness towards me, that I am enabled to read my portion in it : Thou art my sanctification too, for it is through thy potent intercession, that the Holy Spirit operates on my heart ; since then, I owe to God my wisdom, my righteousness, and sanctification, it follows, that I am a redeemed soul ; because, by sanctification, I am dedicated to God in Christ, and made meet, through him, to be a partaker with the saints in light : Christ is thus formed in me the hope of glory.

Seeing then, men and brethren, such are the benefits derivable to those who have an unlimited interest in Jesus, in whom else should they glory ? Whom have they in heaven but him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them ; and who is there on earth, that they should desire in comparison of him ? You who have no interest in him, who feel none of your need of him, how deplorable is your case ! Your fine-spun cobweb-righteousness, what will it avail you ! Compare your
state

state with that of every sinner reported to be saved in Scripture; surely, their affections were widely different from your own! May you hence be driven, through God's grace, to seek for shelter to a rock which is higher than you, to a righteousness which will outweigh, in the balance of justice, all that morality and rectitude of your own fancying, which can tend only to fill you with self-sufficiency, and to drive you from Jesus, to esteem him as no other than a mere moral preacher, who, like Paul, sealed his doctrine with his blood; in which shedding, you feel yourselves no more interested, than in the death of the Apostle; who, that you might not misapprehend the sufferings of Christ, nor their import, hath propounded this short and pithy question, "Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"—May God own, and bless to your souls what has been advanced!

SERMON II.

ISAIAH, CHAP. ii. VERSE ii.

THE LORD ALONE SHALL BE EXALTED IN THAT
DAY.

I Trust you were fully apprised, by my last address to you, who was intended throughout the Scripture, by the Christian's Lord; even that same Jesus, of whom his follower Thomas exclaimed, in accents of adoration, My Lord and my God! It shall be my endeavour, through the same Christ strengthening me, to solicit your souls to join the Disciple heartily in his exclamation, that so the Lord alone may be exalted in *this* day. Indeed the grand essential of religion appears to be this, an exaltation of the Saviour, and a debasement of the creature. How these may be gospelly effected shall, God willing, be made the subject of our present research.

The

The magnification of Jesus commenced at a very early period, even coeval in heaven with the fall of our first parent and was to him made a subject of his contemplation, the moment God revealed to Adam, that The seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head: The exaltation therefore of Jesus is evidently prior to the Law of Moses; and from this very circumstance, exclusive of every other consideration, it calls loudly upon the attention of the Christian; it was moreover brought forward in the extremity of the human race, when sin had made a rupture between God and us; and being brought forth in human exigency, demands peculiar notice; and however it may, by the ritual and ceremonial Law, have been, perhaps, not clouded, but typified, yet whether we recur from thence to the state of man in Eden, or to the state of man in the present day, now that Christ has been manifested in the flesh, it doubtless will appear to the humble and spiritual enquirer, that only one and the same thing was intended. From the Garden of Eden then, as Christians, we choose to be transported to the Garden of Gethsemane; not only to hear with our ears the offer of a Saviour, but to apprehend, with our mental eye, somewhat like the Saviour, in reality, offering himself for us: This is our crown and our palm of rejoicing; he has been now, in these latter days,

days, manifested in the flesh. We no longer like the expectant Jews, look forwards *for* him, but we look upwards *to* him; we cease to be expectants; we commence attendants: Would to God all who hear me this day, were in reality found at Wisdom's porch, waiting daily at the door of the Saviour!

The verse preceding that from whence my text is extracted, is pregnant with various Evangelical exhortations; it reads thus, "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty:" and then the Prophet proceeds, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down!" Surely by the introduction of the term *rock*, the soul of the believer is abundantly instructed to look up to that rock from whence he was hewn; to that rock which was plainly exemplified of old, when God himself, passing before his beloved Moses, hid him in the cleft of the craggy mountain. How incontestibly does this declare, that no man, that is to say, that no human production, neither supported by its own merits, nor fortified by its own religious sect, or persuasion, should approach God in any wise with acceptance.

The Prophet, from whence we speak, seems to have had in his view the day of retribution,

tion, or the final judgment, by his introduction of the phrase *that day*; but as no man shall *then* look up to God with confidence, who cannot here look up to him with comfort, I have deemed myself authorised to bend the words to the idea I have affixed to them; albeit the Prophet's exhibition of them is countenanced, by the Gospel of Luke; when, in speaking of the process of the tremendous day of retribution, the Evangelist quotes the language of Christ, in observing there would then be many who should call on the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them: Yet as the term *rock* does not there occur, but is used in the language of David, in the significancy of deliverance, and admirably adapts itself to the import of my text, I shall consider the verse I have chosen to open my discourse with, in that strain, which may tend, more immediately, to exalt the Lord in *this* day. Woe indeed be to them, who in the time Isaiah alluded to, are not found in Jesus! But we go on.—

The ark, the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness, the city of refuge, and the sacrifices under the Jewish Law, are but so many apt representations of a Saviour to come; and of that peace and security, which could alone be found in him; Seems it to any of you, my fellow-christians, but in name only, a matter
of

of small import, that these significant symbols were instituted? Alas! we feel for you; we bemoan your blindness, we bewail your ignorance; with what a vitiated appetite must you have sat down to the Scriptures; how vapid and unsavoury must they have been in your mouths. Know then, an Evangelist propounds, "that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man, Jesus Christ, be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The Royal Psalmist, in speaking of the Saviour, often stiles him his refuge, his city to flee unto: "Blessed be the Lord," says he, "for he hath shewed me marvellous loving kindness in a strong city:" In the second of the Chronicles, Solomon pronounces, that the places are holy, where the ark of the Lord hath come: And St. Paul, speaking to the Hebrews, of the Jewish sacrifices, asserts, in plain terms, that such were but a shadow, and no substance, not the very image of the things. You may read at your leisure the whole of his tenth chapter; in which he ably developes some of the Jewish symbols, and restores them to their primitive import. If then, as the contrary cannot be scripturally contested, God intended, under these representations, to magnify his Son, through whom the true worshipper

shipper hath alone access to the Father; how do we by our obstinate rejection of Jesus, treat the whole of the Old Testament as an unimportant fable, or a legendary tale; how do we debase him whom God hath purposed shall alone be exalted; corrupt the significance of the doctrine of the New Covenant, and reduce the efficacy of the precious blood-shedding of Christ, to the standard and insufficiency of that of martyrs! But have ye so learned Christ? O sirs, be assured, if the things we have spoken of be true, you have no portion nor lot in them; you may dream of your good deeds—Jesus says, “Without me ye can do nothing;” you may boast of your mighty observance of the law; you know not what you say, nor whereof you affirm; it is Jesus, Jesus only, who hath magnified the law and made it honourable; God sent forth this his Son, of whom you so meanly account, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law: Bring then no more vain oblations; this man, by one offering of himself, hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified! How shall we court the believer in more expressive terms, to hear that blood speak which answereth for his soul? You, who profess yourselves to be of the Church of England, can have no excuse for your backwardness in magnifying the Saviour, if you feel and acknowledge the full extent of the 13th Article of your Church; not that

the opinion of any Church is to be revered, further than it agrees with the doctrine of Christ and of his Apostles; the grand enquiry is, not to what Church we belong, but what fellowship and communion we have with Jesus.

But it remains, that we apprize you, by what mean we may properly exalt the Lord Christ; and this is effected, not by believing him only, that is to say, *of* him simply; but *in* him, and *into* him likewise; it is not barely sufficient that we give credence to his words, for devils doubtless do thus much, but we must go further; believe that he has wrought out a firm reconciliation between God and us, having reconciled us to the Father, by the death of his cross: When we have arrived thus far, we then begin to feel our proper footing, we are certified of our own security, and final perseverance: But there is still behind-hand one further consideration, we must, by believing *into* him, produce works certificatory of our interest in his precious blood-shedding: Without this testimonial of our faith, we deceive ourselves; for Christ, as the Apostle writes, gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Till we are arrived thus far, however safe we may in reality be, according to the Eternal Purpose of

of God, we are by no mean sound in our faith; nor do we exalt Jesus before others; for it is one part of our due magnification of the Saviour, that we confess him before men, as much by becoming the followers of those who are the followers of him, as by confessing our obligations to him for our salvation. Not that this your zeal will be an evidence in your favour, independent of the other; nor will that independent of such zeal. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity: No sooner had Paul been called by divine grace, but he exclaims, Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do? It is then only we act from sanctified principles; all other actions, derived from whatever principles, what are they, but an attempt to keep Christ in the back-ground of the canvas, or at least, to constitute him a subordinate character in the piece! But this is the language of an inspired writer, who at that time, we dare say, was living as much to the glory of God, as either you or I can be; "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" "the life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me:" How will you do away then, even the bare literal importance of the Son of God; who not merely from the now cited passages, but from innumerable parallel ones, is held out,

at least as a prominent figure, in the Christian's religion?

Were we not apprized of the natural blindness of the human heart, one should be induced to suppose, that the very term Christianity implied that Christ was very deeply, and importantly interested in the scheme. My friends, if you feel yourselves duly interested in Jesus, your own feelings will forestall many of my arguments. I preach not myself, I preach Christ the Lord; and I trust am endowed with a portion of his spirit, and that gratitude toward a crucified Jesus will constrain some of you to aim at his exaltation: Were you impressed with the manifestation of his love to your souls, and deeply penetrated with the immensity of his kindness, and your own demerits, surely you would on wings, as it were of love, transport yourselves hither and thither, to assist even the humblest member of his household, and grudge that you were unable to serve his cause better: You would then apprehend, and enter vitally into that doctrine of love, "Whether we eat, or
" drink, or whatever we do, we should do all
" to the glory of God;" "So that whether we
" live, we should live unto the Lord, or whe-
" ther we die, we should die unto the Lord."

Hitherto

Hitherto we have addressed Saints only, but we must put out a word to Sinners, who are still without any desire to come to Jesus. Alas, first, upon what do you place your pretensions to the favour of God? Upon your good works? Read you not that the earth and all its works, that is to say, all earthy works, shall be burnt up? That your's are of an earthy complexion, needs no further proof, one should think, than that they are not wrought in God; such as they are, did they spring up in you, and proceed out from you, out of love to him in whom God the Father, by a voice of the Holy Spirit from heaven, has pronounced himself well pleased? Has the love of Christ constrained you to such performances as you daily vaunt yourselves in? Surely it is blasphemy to declare it: but, remember, we warn you, it is misery to be unaffected with your case; you of all others, who possess neither the ability, the will, nor any idea about coming to Jesus, however you may magnify, in time, your own wonderful excellencies, be assured Christ will get himself the honour over you in eternity, by the destruction of your bodies and souls. You are mainly ignorant of the corruption of your nature; sin hath so beclouded your vision with unbelief, that you do not discern how that "in Adam all die." Ye continue wilfully unaffected with the reproof of Jesus, "Ye
" will

"will not come to me that ye may have life." Would to God, if it be his good pleasure, that he would impress your spirits, with serious and gosselled concern for your situation, before you go hence. O that by the foolishness of my discourse, it might, be recorded, that at least one seal was affixed to my ministry, one soul was born to God! Surely, surely, this would lead both you and me to magnify Jesus, that it hath pleased him in *this* our day, to evidence to your consciences, the things which appertain to their eternal peace; they may soon be eclipsed from your sight!

But to go on, Are there some of you, who are willing to apprehend the love of your Saviour to your souls by faith? Though you do not feel at present the extent of his worth and value, we congratulate you, that you begin to descry there is something in this beloved, more than in another's beloved: No, no, his worth and value shall be the subject of contemplation and song, during the boundless ages of eternity; for "worthy is the lamb that was slain!" Angels desire to explore this mystery in heaven, and it is the joy of saints on earth, that they may occasionally refresh their hearts, when fainting during their pilgrimage, by anticipating those chorusses of love and triumph, which they shall hereafter be summoned to join in the bliss above.

And

And now, my friends, do not some of you feel your hearts glow within you, by anticipating that celestial harmony through faith, in which you are shortly in reality to bear your part? Do any of you sit here cold and unaffected as the seats you repose on; how different your disposition, from that of saints and angels! Surely, if it were possible, you should apprehend it, shame would rouse you into energy, in pursuit of that in which your everlasting all is concerned!—But I forbear—The efforts of the tongues of men and angels, of Moses and the prophets, are all ineffectual, if unapplied to your hearts by that blessed Spirit, which inspired their labours: To him in Christ, we do, we must commit you; may he take of the treasures of Jesus, and hold them up before your eyes; may he enable you to see what he has done for others, and, peradventure, for yourselves; and may he prosper what has been intentionally delivered for your benefit.

SER-

SERMON III.

PSALM ii. VERSE 12.

KISS THE SON, LEST HE BE ANGRY, AND SO YE PERISH FROM THE WAY, WHEN HIS WRATH IS KINDLED BUT A LITTLE: BLESSED ARE ALL THEY THAT PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM.

THESE are the words of one "who had "kissed, with the kisses of his mouth," the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, in the intention of divine Providence; and as he has laid such stress upon the salutation he recommends, he doubtless felt the importance of the advice he gives: We will endeavour, God willing, to investigate his meaning; and labour to participate of the same spiritual delights. The term kiss, whenever adopted in its good sense in Scripture phraseology, imports reconciliation, and nearness of access; thus, in the 27th of Genesis, Isaac says

says to Esau, as he supposed, kifs me, my son; and although the parent was imposed upon by Jacob, the blessing was attached to the younger son. The prodigal, when he returned to his parent, partook of the same congratulatory kifs. It is likewise, in Luke the 7th, used in the acceptation of very immediate affection and endearment; alluding to Mary Magdalen, our Lord says, This woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kifs my feet. And thus much I should hope would suffice to convey to your idea the import of the first word of the text.

By the Son, you will not easily be persuaded to understand any other person, than the Son of Man, the Man Christ Jesus; phrases of a congenial significancy, being so numerously disseminated throughout the inspired page: The expressions of "being found in Jesus," "being reconciled to God by the death of "his Son," and the like, are paralleled by the words I have just now read to you from the royal Psalmist.

To proceed—we are admonished to seek after this reconciliation with Jesus, from the two following considerations: The one, lest he should be angry, and so hide his face from us; thus, says the prophet Isaiah, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not
E your

your hearts; in the book of Proverbs we are presented with a view of the lawful effects of contumacy and obduracy on this head; "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out mine hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity;" and the same inspired writer goes on, "When distress and anguish come upon you, then shall ye call upon me, but I will not answer; ye shall seek me early, but ye shall not find me"—That this is spoken of the eternal Logos, or Christ Jesus, few would go about to deny, one should suppose, who had perused the opening of the Gospel of St. John, or had considered the 20th verse of the first chapter of Proverbs, where it is said, "Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets;" that is to say, the Gospel invitation, which was to be promulgated, not on the house-tops only, but in the highways and hedges. We are supplied, among many others, with the representation of two very awful rejections of the favour of the Son of God extended forth to sinners; the one, comprised in the old Testament, and exhibited in the person of Moses, the type of Christ, the other brought forward in the person of Jesus himself; they are as we now produce them to your notice; we pass on to their consideration.

When

When Pharaoh had long trifled with the interference of Moses, his ostensible mediator with God for him, the king adds to his other impieties this further iniquity, in the form and substance of a threat, "See my face no more; get thee from me, for in the day that thou seeest my face thou shalt die;" to whom Moses replied, "Thou hast spoken well; I will see thy face again no more." The ruin of the king of Egypt soon succeeds this rejection of his intercessor. The second instance we would impress upon your minds, stands recorded in the Gospel of St. Luke; and is conveyed to us in the words our Lord adopted, when he uttered one of the most pathetic exclamations which ever proceeded out of hallowed lips: "O Jerusalem," he exclaims, "Thou which killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate;" and though the sequel implies, that at a future period God would again make them a second offer of his mercy, yet surely this we have recited, is a sufficient discouragement of obduracy. Hence appears the abundant propriety of acquainting now ourselves with God, and being at peace with him. This doctrine is backed with the promise,

mise, "They that seek me early shall find me." We have consolidated the two doctrines, and have shewn you already an example, not only of the anger of the Lord, but also of his final rejection of the impenitent and careless sinner; and now let me demand of you an answer to a question first proposed by St. Paul; for if he that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace?

By this introduction of the reasoning of St. Paul, you will clearly perceive, I address myself to those in the present instance, who have been brought into somewhat of Gospel liberty; but from one sinful cause or other, have lost the gracious impression, wherewith their souls were heretofore stamped. Such we can only address in the language of the prophet, "Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" The same fountain is open for ablution from sins of a most scarlet and crimson die; waters better than those of Abana and Pharphar, other streams, in which if *you*, *even you*, wash yourselves, you shall be clean: You once felt your need of a participation
of

of these blessings, you were not ignorant that there was a prophet in Israel, a balm in Gilead, and a physician there. O sirs, may you be enabled to return, to return instantaneously and "kiss the Son:" If he heretofore loved you, be assured he will heal all your back-slidings. O take him at his word, recur to the testimony he has left behind him, to that testimony he has sealed with his blood—Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast off; not even for your back-slidings, however notoriously you may have rebelled against him: But observe, we address ourselves to those who feel themselves willing to return: We seek not to hold out a licence for the impious; we call you now to arise and go to your Father, to day, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Would that you might feel the Spirit impressing this language of inspiration on your souls, behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation: But do any of you despair of returning from the heinousness of your impieties, add not to them all this superlative one, to belie the promise of God, written as it were with a pen of iron throughout his gracious oracles: You, of every other description of sinners, have the least excuse to plead in your favour;

your; you once felt the comfortable sensation of living under the enjoyment of Gospel consolation: O may you not be guilty, by your delay, of the sin of unbelief, nor mock God to his face, by making him a liar; nor trifle with his patience.

The opening of the text is peculiarly encouraging to sinners of your description, "kiss the Son lest he be angry." To perform this, it is necessary the sinner should, by faith, have a manifestation of his person; of him who is full of grace and truth; and this you have had: How then do you belie all your former experience, by your backwardness to a reconciliation with the Saviour, who, as you have felt, is *mighty* to save. O may you now have the opportunity of exulting, that he is able to save to the uttermost, all who truly turn to him. But an argument you will perhaps employ against yourselves is this; I cannot conquer my sins, I cannot subdue my corruptions, when I would do good, evil is present with me; what is Paul's boast on the same occasion, I thank my God through Jesus Christ my Lord: My victory over my corruptions forms not my hope of heaven and happiness, Christ, and he only, is formed in me the hope of glory: Do not mistake me, I want not to fix you down in Antinomianism, but wish you to be satisfied with

with nothing short of an whole Christ, truly and unconditionally applied to your souls; your corruptions instead of withholding you from Jesus, should force you the more urgently and impetuously to him; on your scheme, you would become a purchaser of his merits, and benefits of his death and passion, you would divide the crown with the Saviour, and have somewhat whereof to boast.

Exercised with temptation, the thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan, how did Paul conduct himself? He earnestly besought the Lord, that it might depart from him; for such is the import of the words; and the answer he received was, My grace is sufficient for thee. But here you will argue, true, but Paul was then a subject of divine love, even in his own feelings and acknowledgement. We answer, if grace, by which *he* stood, was a quality so necessary for him, how much rather (if it were possible) for you? Hence my argument, that nothing short of an applied Christ ought to satisfy your consciences: *He*, even *he* blotteth out your sins, and besides him there is none else. Admitting you were of yourselves able to subdue corruption; Christ says, he came not to save the righteous, but sinners, the whole need not a physician, from whence it is inferible, that if corruption did not occasionally possess you, you would

would not apprehend the value of Christ, by consequence not receive him as your all in all. If he giveth his redeemed to will and to do of his good pleasure, it follows, he must give the ability to refrain, or you constitute him a partial Christ.

If then, men and brethren, these things be so, if he who gives you to do of his good pleasure, gives you also to will, examine your ownelves, prove your ownelves: You read perhaps, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer; but there is a wide difference between indulging in the corruption, and a desire to be rescued from its prevalency; they may both obtain in one and the same subject, but wherever the latter seriously reigns, we hope, we pronounce better things of such, the day of God's power we trust begins to dawn upon their souls, and they will be made *a more willing* people; he is faithful who promised, he also will do it.

We trust enough has been, humanly speaking, urged by way of encouragement to sinners of the complexion we have already addressed; but we must offer a few arguments to those who are either ignorant of the grace of Jesus, or unconcerned about it. Now the first argument I am to address to these, shews the importance of an interest in Jesus.

You

You will none of you, we suppose, imagine you are to be saved for your ill deeds, but we are afraid some of you conceit of God that he is more merciful than his written edict has pointed him out to be, or in other words, that he will be merciful to you *in* and *after* another process and manner, than what he has really held out to your necessities: Be assured, his scheme of salvation is uniform; he deals not with you after a manner different from his conduct with others: It is the admonition of David to all, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish," not *in* the way, for you are out of it; which phrase of the Psalmist should alarm those, who are barely *in* it, or *in* quest of it, and not yet arrived at the haven where they would be: O that this reflection might quicken their sedulity!

The sweet finger of Israel, according to our received translation of his sentiments, is made to go on, "When his wrath is kindled but a little," what doctrine this reading was intended to convey, perhaps it is not easy to conjecture; the sense of the original would be better expressed by these words, "When his wrath of a sudden be enkindled," that is to say, lest he should pluck you away, lest he should advance upon you unexpectedly, like a thief in the night, and there should be none to deliver you, no Jesus to intercede, no appointed rock, no shelter for your refuge.

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If

If it be the province of a faithful preacher to alarm your consciences, it is also his duty, like the good Samaritan, to pour oil and balm into the wounds of the spirit. David has given a sufficient example; blessed are all they, he bespeaks the returning souls, who put their trust in the Son: Happy will it be for you, if his language, far more forceable than any we can adopt, should lead you not to rest contented with an happiness, short of what is to be found in a reconciliation with Jesus, be assured all else is but a refuge of lies, a trusting to the reed instead of the rock, a leaning as it were on the point of a spear, which shall eventually thrust the incliner through.

David, by your confined glance at this psalm of his, will perhaps be considered, as addressing himself more immediately to kings and judges of the earth; but as we are acquainted with no religion, provided peculiarly and appropriatedly for kings, we must of necessity go in quest of some *general* significancy, and, it may be, the right interpretation is ready to our hands—The prophet says, Other Lords have had dominion over us, intending thereby not only sins and corruptions, but fancied recommendations of God's compassion and mercy towards us, which are in reality the kings, the precious pacifications of the carnal soul,
the

the kings of the earth which are earthly; yet proceeds the prophet, by Thee only, importing by Christ the great provisionary, will we make mention of thy name. And thus much we hope will suffice, through God's blessing, to discover on this occasion to you, the mind of the writer, from whom we have borrowed our text. Nor is the intercession of Christ and his prevalency less clearly pointed out in the 8th verse of this psalm, Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance (sings the royal harper, in personification of God the Father addressing his Son), nay, even the end of the earth for thy possession.

Him then may we beseech, that he would come over the mountains of our sins, and of our corruptions; for these tend to veil him from our view, and eclipse the consolations of the Spirit from our apprehension; but we must be contented to continue passive in Christ's hands, to stand still and behold his salvation; though we do not implore you to sleep still—No, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light! God is willing, is pleased to be enquired of for these comforts and supports; it is an evidence in your favour when you are found upon your knees before him in faithful prayer for these best, these most consolatory purposes;

without him you can do nothing, nor yet *with* him out of Christ, or rather out of Christ *he* will have nothing to do with *you*; how foolish then, as well as how impious do you continue, if you will not approach him in his own appointed way; if you must even perish *in* the way, 'had not you better expire at the feet of Jesus? Though he slay you, be assured it will not make for your discomfiture, that you have put your trust in his Son. And finally, all other are not *the way*—He that climbeth up into the sheep-fold *some other way*, is a thief and a robber—*I am the way*, says Christ, I am *the door*.—O that these considerations might be so blessed to your souls, that they might induce you to call upon Jesus while he is near, to seek him while he may be found, to get you unto this Lord, even to have recourse unto him *right humbly*!

SERMON IV.

PSALM i. VERSE 1.

BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT WALKETH NOT IN
THE COUNSEL OF THE UNGODLY, NOR STAND-
ETH IN THE WAY OF SINNERS, NOR SITTETH IN
THE SEAT OF THE SCORNFUL.

THE psalms of David, perused either in the original, or in the bible translation of them, may be justly deemed a body of the soundest divinity; we hope what we said to you on the subject of the second, was not unaccompanied with spiritual effect; we are about to preach to you the same Jesus from the first of them; may he confer on you the hearing ear, and the understanding heart!

Peradventure, there may be some present, who are ready to exclaim, Surely there needed no David to preach to us such a doctrine as
this;

this; pause a while, my brethren, and let us annex the second verse to its elder brother, and we shall find ourselves, it may be, obliged to the psalmist for his information, or at least, to that Spirit, which inspired his minstrelsy.

We purpose to consider the whole psalm in order as it lies before us.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly: Here is a strong expression taken from one of the necessary engagements in life, importing a steady and uniform continuance in evil, not a giving into sin through surprise, or violent temptation. But this is not all—he who *walketh* not in the counsel of the ungodly, must, if he purposes to evidence his blessedness, by no mean *stand* in the way of sinners; which implies, a permanent continuance in friendship with evil doers; nor must he *sit* in the seat of the scornful: But the blessedness of a man's estate, is not testified alone by these bare negative qualities; indeed there are many who from disinclination, are withheld from various criminal indulgences, or from motives which originate from no sanctified principles: It is not from an abstinence from these vain pursuits, that David ventures to pronounce this individual blessed; his delight, superadded to these flattering and favourable appearances, must

must be in the law of the Lord; or his integrity issues from a wrong principle; and if such an one as he describes, does delight in the law of the Lord, he will evidence his delight to his own soul at least, if not to those of others, by his meditation therein day and night: Here then we make our pause, where David made his first pause.

You may possess, in the *literal* sense, every commendable quality recited in the *first* verse of this spiritual song, without being at all affected with, or interested in the *second*; but if you are arrived to the happy experience of the *second*, the *first* will attach itself to you, as a natural consequence. And here it is to be deplored, that men are too apt naturally to begin their religion at the wrong end, and to suppose, that they can produce works well pleasing to God, before they feel themselves interested in him; or, which is the same thing, before they perceive, by the application of the Spirit of Grace to their souls, that Christ is at all concerned* for them as a covenant God. By the words law of the Lord, it is clear David had no respect, on this occasion, to the law of Moses: Though codes of statutes not opposite to each other, they are widely different in their extent and import; the latter extending to the very thoughts of our hearts: And that we do not misapprehend the mind of this man after God's own heart,
let

let us hear him speak for himself, in the 19th psalm, where he resumes the subject: "The law of the Lord is perfect," he observes, "converting the soul," but never did any one hear that the law of Moses gave this converting principle, it inclines you to trust in itself, and not to look up to the Lord; hence in the 12th verse David breaks out, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults." Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, then shall I be right, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression;" which, whether we interpret it, of the sin of unbelief, or of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, are neither of them, so much as hinted at, in the law of Moses: He goes on, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Who then shall assert, that this holy man of God could be looking up to the ten commandments, as you have them delivered in the book of Exodus? He appears, on the contrary, to have anticipated the mind of the Apostle, and to have petitioned, that he might "adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour" in word, and in deed,—"*in all things*;" and that his conversation might "be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

We

We now encounter the 3d verse, And this blessed man " shall be like a tree planted by " the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his " fruit in due season : " The mind of the author, in a *mere literal* acceptation, is more beautiful and expressive upon reflection, than at the first glance : The country, of which he was an inhabitant, was situated in a very southward climate, obnoxious to much heat, and drought : Thus you will read in Genesis of frequent contentions respecting the possession and impropriation of wells and springs of water ; but here perhaps David also has a latent meaning, alluding to the Spirit of Grace, and infers, that the persons in whom these excellent qualities abound, must be situated contiguously to the Holy Spirit, or mystically united to Christ : He interprets himself, in another psalm, in these words, where he exclaims, " All my *fresh springs* are in thee ! " And he is Evangelically justified by the declaration of Christ himself, The water that I shall give, shall be in the receiver a well of water springing up unto everlasting life ; every branch which beareth fruit, my heavenly Father purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit : And that we do not make the poet sing a language different from his own intention, hear him on a future occasion singing, Such as be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of our
G God;

God; that is to say, such as are by grace united to him here, shall enjoy the comfortable fruition of him hereafter.

We go on; "his leaf also shall not wither;" it is one characteristic of the prophane, and Christless soul, that his leaf does wither, though he flourish in great prosperity, like a green bay tree, yet, says David, I afterward went by, and lo he was gone! I sought him, but his place could no where be found! We rather apprehend, that the Psalmist spake of one who had received some gracious impression, like the stony-ground hearers, because he observes, that he saw him in great prosperity: I do not apprehend here David spake of external worth or dignity, but that not being a tree which the Lord's right hand had planted, when the sun was up, he was scorched; that is to say, when temptations began to attack him, he was offended, and walked no more with Jesus: This is not the case with the trees of the Lord, they are full of sap, and are described (which is contrary to the trees which are planted by men), as bringing forth more fruit in their *age*, going on from perfection unto perfection; not that we would have you interpret the phrase, perfection, in the sense too many are apt to affix to it; it implies only a considerable and unusual degree of luxuriancy and exuberance: "And what-
" ever

“ ever he doth it shall prosper;” that is to say, whatsoever he *graciously* doeth, it is directed and furthered by the Spirit of Grace, and must determine prosperously: David has no retrospect to temporal felicity in this sentence; the natural misery of Lazarus, and of others, is ample testimony to the contrary: But though to outward view such seem to be poor and perishing souls, they have bread to eat which the world knoweth not of: Our Saviour felt as little temporal felicity as any man we must allow, yet he saw his spiritual seed, and the work of the Lord *prospered* in his hand: We are apt to attach an idea of outward prosperity, in concomitancy with internal piety; and to argue, if the thing be so, why are these souls thus? Ask of them, they can speak their own feelings; one of the most afflicted of them could say, Though he slay me, yet will I put my trust in him! We admit that the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; that Job’s latter end exceeded his beginning in prosperity; that every work that Hezekiah began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered. All whom we have recited had their appointed share of misery; And it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of heaven. Say ye to the righteous, exclaims the Prophet, that it shall

be well with him at last; for they shall eat of the fruit of their doings: We know, urges the Apostle, that all things work together for good, to them who love God.

But we must now proceed to take a view of the more unpleasant side of the description. "The ungodly are not so." We imagine you allow they are not blessed—such perhaps may not be apparently profligate, and indeed, as far as head knowledge is concerned, they may delight in the law of the Lord; they may admire it as a system, but it is the phrase of Jesus, if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them! And these perhaps are the most deplorable species of ungodly men, deceivers of themselves and of others; they come in with the pious, and like Ahitophel, walk with David in the house of the Lord as friends; but being lighter than vanity, mere chaff, though they come in with the wheat, when the Son of Man shall take his fan in his hand, he will thoroughly purge his floor; not *the* floor, but *his* floor, and gather the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire:—This I trust needs no further explication.

David, in pursuing the argument, proceeds thus, "therefore the ungodly shall not be able
"to stand in the judgment," what sort of
a stand

a stand they shall make there, may be read in the close of the 25th of Matthew; "Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;" by the term righteous in Scripture, when applied to our nature, we are to understand, righteous by imputation, and, in this sense, the righteous man worketh righteousness; to avail ourselves of David's metaphor, he is constituted a good tree; and it is his characteristic, that he produces good fruit; not to his own praise, but to the glory and praise of God; who, having digged about it, and dunged it, may be duly said, to have given its increase. Here an objection will be started by the unrenewed heart, If these things be so, it is impossible we can save ourselves, and how are we accountable, if God will not save us? We demand of you, are you willing, having apprehended thus much, to come to him on his own terms? That argument, which you quote, is pregnant with the fullest consolation to those who are made a willing people, it is their best security for their final perseverance; it is a security to them, that he who hath begun the good work, will carry it on to the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we pass on to the last verse, "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous:" The word know, in its desirable import throughout

out the Scripture, is adequate to the terms ordain, constitute, and approve; in this last sense, it is employed, I remember, by a profane writer; the poet Pindar, in celebrating one of his heroes, speaks of him as a man whom the lyre and the song *know*; that is *acknowledge*, or celebrate. Thus says our Lord, I know my sheep, and am known of mine; An Apostle writes it, Whom he foreknew, them also he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; and in this sense, we must interpret the mind of the Psalmist; though were you to take it in the signification, quoted from the Theban Poet, it would be equivalent to the Gospel phrase of confessing, and approving before men; this however, does not so well connect with the other component parts of the Hymn, and though true in itself, it is not in unison with the general part of this song of Zion, which we wish to consider as a sort of Gospel in miniature; for if it be carefully perused, it will appear to hold out two very important articles of the Christian's faith, to wit, that there are none righteous who are not constituted so; or in other words, that we must be passively righteous, before we can be actively so, as the verse we are now arrived at, plainly indicates; it may be confirmed by these glosses from the New Testament, No man can come unto me (Christ) unless the Father draw him;

as

as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed;—works which he hath fore-ordained that we should walk in; walk worthy of your vocation,—that is calling.

Upon the last clause it is not necessary, in this place, that we should expatiate; if whatever the righteous doth shall prosper, it follows, it is not so with the wicked; the way of the ungodly shall perish; it occurs in another place, the end of the ungodly is, they shall be rooted out at the last. Let thus much suffice for a Paraphrase on this portion of Scripture: And now permit me to make an home application. And first, relinquishment of sin is no proof, simply considered of itself, of acceptance with the Saviour: You who pretend to be members of the Church of England, refer to your 13th article—We will propose a very natural and common case; a female has been guilty of incontinency, she is united to the co-partner of her crimes; do you apprehend her union will do away her antecedent Criminality? How does your opinion on such principles unite with the World? And how does it disunite with the doctrines of Grace? If such be your idea, as we have recited it, how do you disannul the atonement of Jesus, and set man on the basis of his own supposed importance?

We

We now feel ourselves necessitated to wind up our subject; time, and not inclination, is our summon, but we wish to annex with our general argument what we have brought forward to your view. We have hitherto preached Christ, and we would still preach him, *him* of whom all the Prophets bare witness: We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. If you read him not in what has been already advanced, we are apprehensive you have no present manifestation that you have a portion in him. We hope some of you feel the import of what we have been enabled to recommend, that you have an interest in Jesus, and that Christ is to believers all in all. Religion then becomes habitual to the soul, indeed it cannot exist in any other element—motives of gratitude, the love of Christ will constrain you—You will argue when solicited to sin, as Paul has done before you, Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! It is true there may be morality independent of this, but there can be no true piety, no acceptance with God. Do you seek to be blessed? May you pray for an interest in Christ: Blessed is the man, and he only, to whom the Lord will not impute sin: Blessed is the man who through faith can hear the
still

still small voice of the Son of God thus addressing his soul, I am he that blotteth out your evil deeds, and your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more!

SERMON V.

I PETER, CHAP. V. VERSE 7.

CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM, FOR HE
CARETH FOR YOU.

THIS is one of the most difficult lessons the Christian has to learn, and it is one of the most necessary—against hope, like Abraham to live in hope, implies an unusual confidence and trust in God: To cast *some* of their care upon him, is what many are able to effect, but to cast *all*, and *every* concern upon him, to live *entirely* by faith, to depend *totally* upon his promises, is more than mere human nature is either able to effect, or endowed with the will, to put into execution. To live entirely upon promises, to walk uniformly by faith instead of sight, implies such a total dependence upon other than self, that no room is left for human ingenuity, craft,
or

or foresight: To this state, however, the believer in Jesus, must sooner or later be brought. Doth God take care for oxen? much more for you, O ye of little faith! Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not, neither do they gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them:

We are not however about to encourage a life of indolence; he that doth not work, if he be not independent, and has the use of his limbs, neither should he eat. The Apostle we speak from, conveys no toleration for idleness; his meaning will bear no such interpretation; and it is impossible we should live up to his meaning, till we are convinced, that God careth for us; or in other words, till the love of Christ be shed abroad in our hearts by faith; not our love of him simply, but his love of us; which, according to the whole tenor of Scripture, must precede our love of him: Thus St. John asserts, we love him because he first loved us; and hereby we know that we are his, by his Spirit which he hath given us. You who are brought into Gospel Liberty, apprehend in good measure, what it is to cast all your care upon Christ: He has manifested his love to you, and as that is a testimonial of his present regard, so is it an earnest of his future favour: You can, in a great measure, adopt the

advice of the text ; but clouds will, now and then, eclipse this sunshine from the soul ; temptation will beset even the regenerate, and if storms do not for a while predominate, they will however vex and torment them. Here then is one reason, why you should cast all your care upon Jesus ; he hath evidenced an affection for you, it is his advice, Take no thought for the morrow, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his Righteousness, that is to say, the righteousness which is by faith, and all these things, meaning by the context all things necessary, shall be added unto you. We are commanded to go forth, not in our own strength, but strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might : This is going forth, if not conquering, at least finally to conquer : Indeed it may, in one significancy, be said to be going forth conquering ; because the sin of unbelief does not, for that season at least, possess the soul. Thus, casting all your care upon him, is to be interpreted, casting all your care upon Jesus ; in the phrase of Paul, looking unto Jesus ; the verse foregoing calls for such acceptance ; but we have long before explained to you who is the Christian's God, indeed the title the believer bears, being that of Christian, infers, that he has immediately to do with Christ ; upon whom then can he so implicitly cast his care, as on him, who, by the will
of

of God the Father, and by the gracious acquiescence of the Holy Spirit, is constituted the believer's grand resource and provisionary? We will give an instance or two of the ill effects of not casting all our care upon the promises of God.

When the Lord from Heaven graciously rained Manna round about the camp of the famishing Israelites, they were to leave nothing of it until the morning; which command from Moses, was plainly sanctified by the following declaration; He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; which by the way, I may observe, was typical of the All-sufficiency of Christ, that bread which came down from heaven: The Manna however which was reserved until the morning bred worms and stank; this was the consequence of not living upon the promises of God. The other instance we would recite to you, respects a very eminent Saint, and prominent character in the Holy Scriptures, we mean David; flushed with his own self-importance, and victorious over the Philistines, he must needs, without enquiring of the Lord, step forth, like some knight-errant, or storied adventurer of the age of chivalry, intentionally to possess himself of the ark of God;—we read in
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the inspired records, his disappointment, his disgrace, and his humiliation.

Nay, we know not what exercise there could be for faith, or what necessity for prayer, if the soul once impressed into the number of Christ's elect, had no further occasion to be looking up to him; we are to receive our portion of meat only in due season, day by day, as the children of Israel obtained their Manna: And indeed by so trusting upon God in a covenanting Jesus, we not only preach, but live, and live upon his word, casting all our care upon him. But some man will say, I have a numerous family, and little to administer to their support: It may be so—We demand of you, are you a believer? Hear what the Prophet says to the Saint, reduced to the last extremity, to greater exigencies than you now experience: Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and as for your widow, let her trust in me. An eminent parallel this, to the words of our text, "casting all your care upon him;" and in proportion as you are brought under the power of the Gospel, this you will do from principle. Has God manifested his love to you by bestowing upon you his Son, how shall he not with him also freely give you all things? Whatsoever you ask in my name, says Jesus,
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the Father will give it to you, ask and ye shall receive; can there be a more unlimited promise? By your disbelief then, how do you dishonour God, who is represented as a faithful Creator; faithful, who also will do it; how do you, as far as in you lies, disunite yourselves from the love of Jesus, and refuse to open the door to your beloved? Behold he stands at the door and knocks; we hope he is now knocking at the door of some of your hearts. O what enemies are you to yourselves, what rebels, that you will not admit a prince into your territories, when you cannot but know that he is a prince of peace! Is this the respect you shew for God's word? this the credence you put in his promises? this the concern you express for his honour, and your own everlasting peace? May he incline you of his Grace, to be careful for nothing else in comparison of him, casting all your care upon him; careful for nothing; but in every thing giving thanks, let your supplications through Jesus be made known unto God; not but that he knows what you have need of before you ask him; but he is pleased to be enquired of according to his own appointment; which implies a dependence upon his fidelity, and his promises.

But there is another sense in which we wish to consider the doctrine of the text:

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As we are taught by it to look up to Christ for Temporal, so we must not forget we are thereby encouraged also to seek to him for Spiritual supplies, for knowledge and wisdom, for of God he is made unto us Wisdom as well as Redemption—and here we may take occasion to reprove the practice of some, who, under the idea of wishing to refute infidel doctrines, are bold enough to peruse the productions of Arians and Socinians; such surely forget the command of Christ, Search the Scriptures; he does not refer you to gain the knowledge of Salvation from his enemies; “My son, cease to listen to the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge;” you are not then casting your care upon Jesus, but attempting in some sort to progress in your own strength; he who faithfully preaches Jesus from his own experience, will come up to the commission assigned him: and beside, we are not led to hope, that we shall obtain information from unhallowed supplies; these having thus run not only against the current of Grace, but likewise unfertile—it is the declaration of God that such shall not profit his people at all: We pray, not to be led into temptation, but surely by a conduct like this, we render ourselves liable to be tempted to call in question the great truths of Christianity; we have recourse to the Devil for argument, and it is scarcely to be

be expected, he should be moved to further the cause of Christ.

Again, we do not cast all our care upon Jesus, when we are fearful to come forward in his service, under the apprehension of some temporal inconvenience, that is to say, when we argue thus; I could wish to be employed in God's service, to live and die in the work, but then I shall offend this friend or that relation, by which mean I may incur the loss of a comfortable subsistence, when I am unable to speak a word for God: Hear what our Lord says, "There is no man that hath
 " left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father,
 " or mother, or wife, or children, or lands,
 " for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall
 " receive an hundred fold now in this time,
 " houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mo-
 " thers, and children, and lands, with perse-
 " cutions; and in the world to come eternal
 " life:" And will you pretend that you cast all your care upon Jesus, when inferior objects are put in competition with him; will you presume to affirm, that you come up to this doctrine of Peter, when Christ is not your all in all; the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last of your wishes; when you are not enabled to adopt the language of holy David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee,
 " and there is none upon earth I desire in
 I " com-

“ comparison of thee?” If you are constituted a real Christian, I do not affirm that this will be ever, but it will be for the most part, the language of your heart, unbelief will momentarily assault you, and Satan will occasionally beset you; in short, temptation is one of the badges of a Christian, it is the faithful servant of Jesus with whom Satan is peculiarly interested to contend, to aim to cheat God of a soul, and to baffle and cause such soul to belie all his former dependencies and avowed experiences. Seeing then the case is so, how necessary is it that we should cast all our care upon Jesus, we, who feel ourselves to be believers, and profess to draw all our Spiritual Existence from him!

We have hitherto spoken in the general to Saints, for even they have much need of admonition, and them we would teach and exhort: But we must not overlook sinners; by this term, we intend not only vile and gross offenders, but all who are living without an interest in Christ impressed upon their consciences—instead of casting all your care upon him, you are some of you enumerating the quantity and the quality of your supposed good performances, the immensity of your merits, pleading from them your claim to happiness. Alas, how like to you the Pharisee in the Gospel, “ I am no extortioner, I
“ pay

" pay tithes of all that I possess;" but he needed not to have " thanked God, that he was " not as other men are," for all have sinned, and there is no difference between men in the eye of God's justice, saving what is made by Grace ; to this, the Pharisees and yourselves remain utter strangers: How do you by seeking to justify yourselves, belie the doctrines of the Gospel, which declare your inability to effect such justification; how do you bar the door of your hearts against the admission of the love of Christ, and, as far as you can, exclude yourselves out of Heaven and happiness; indeed there is more hope of a fool than of you; the irreligious, the profane have nothing whereof to boast, no merit of their own to plead, and of course no prejudice in their own favour; they have no other than a natural enmity to Godliness, and not to Christ to submit to be subdued; but you are buoyed up in opposition to him by your unwarrantable Spiritual Pride. The profane and profligate are careful for nothing; but you have cast all your care upon a wrong object: They are thoughtless infidels, you are misbelievers; they profess to have no hope, and you confide in a false one, in direct opposition to the Gospel of God; they remain ignorant of its importance, while you misinterpret its declarations: The believer is exhorted to be strong in the Lord and in the

power of his might, but you affect to be strong in your own might, and contrary to the experience of the Psalmist, "make mention of *your* righteousness only."

But before we close our address, we must put forth a word to two or three species of informed characters: There are many who know the doctrines we preach, what they are, and upon what Scriptures they are founded, but totally disbelieve them; on the contrary, there are others, who do fully admit them to be true, but heartily detest them: This second species seem to come under the denomination of Apostates, as described in the 4th, 5th, and 6th verses of the 6th chapter of the Hebrews; it is in vain to contend with these men: But there is a third species who admit these truths, and yet live not under the happy experience of an application of them to their souls: To this last we would immediately address ourselves.

You of my hearers know just enough to render yourselves compleatly miserable on this side the grave, you are aware the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, or in other words, that, unsprinkled with it, no man shall see Salvation, and "you are not as yet come to the blood of sprinkling:" Is there not a something whispering in accents, to which
you

you are occasionally compelled to listen, that all is not well with you? Does not some secret check, ever and anon, restrain the flow of your most darling gratifications? The morsel you eat, and the wine you drink, do not they appear to come to you unblest? And is this a state to be envied—a state of enmity with God? For the carnal mind, the conscience unimpressed by the Spirit of Grace, may ever be considered as thus affected; there has no reconciliation taken place between the Father of Spirits, and your spirit; and if you are deeply moved with the horror of your situation, your very existence I know will at times feel to you to be no other than a trespass on God's patience: It is well you feel somewhat of remorse; and we wish your peace: May what you do feel, determine, by the interposition of divine Grace, in a repentance not to be repented of—we apprehend what you do feel, may be only the striving of a few legal convictions, happy will it be for you if it should eventuate in the operation of God's Spirit, convincing you of sin, and intending shortly to hold out to you a pardon ratified and sealed: It is supposed you are not ignorant, that this can be done through the intercession of Jesus, and it is well you give credence thus far to the Oracles of God: You know not as yet that any thing in this way is designed in Providence
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for you; but you inherit one necessary principle of it, a confession that if Christ *will* he *can* make you clean. Having arrived hither, it will aggravate your condemnation if you rest here: May God pour out the Spirit of prayer upon your hearts; may he incline you to petition, that you may be driven to diligent prayer, that you may be impressed to ask such things as shall please him. Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, ever liveth to make intercession for those souls he has purchased by his blood; but he delights to hear the supplication of his own dear children, and it is a happy presage in their favour, that however as yet ignorant of God's eternal love to their souls, they are wrestling with him in faithful prayer: If such be your engagement, you are, at least in *one* sense, casting your care upon Jesus. It is God's intention that his Son should be honoured, and we trust he will confer on you an answer of peace—we would encourage you to go on, and would back our advice with the language of David, "Delight thou in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart; commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass."

SERMON VI.

ROMANS CHAP. X. VERSE 15.

HOW SHALL THEY PREACH UNLESS THEY BE
SENT?

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, we hope the general tenor of what has been directed to you, has fully evidenced that we had a message unto you from God; indeed on no other principle ought we to have come forth. We trust, the motive of our addressing you thus seriously, will be graciously manifested in its happy effects; to the building up of some of you, and to our present and everlasting consolation. We have not preached ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and as we have not preached ourselves, so we hope some of you feel that the word has not come in the letter only, but in the Spirit, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; we supplicate

plicate the Spirit, that he would manifest to your consciences, by these effects, that we speak of, and from God.

The subject now undertaken is worthy of a very peculiar consideration in this present day, when many, having received the truth in the mere light of it only, are taking upon themselves to forge a commission in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Hear what the Prophet exclaims against these; Woe unto the Prophets which run, and I have not sent them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all! The inspired writer admits they were Prophets to every purpose and intent, and it might be, heavenly instructed too; but they were not called upon to execute the office of such; for no man taketh upon himself this office save he who is called after the order of Melchisedeck, as was Aaron. Christ stepping forth to preach the Gospel of Peace, observes he must work the work of him that *sent* him: This declaration is evidential of his receiving a divine commission. What the Church of England originally thought on this subject may be read in her office of ordination of Priests; in which the candidate is seriously interrogated, whether he be moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon himself the office he solicits: Though we wish to preach up no Church—but the Gospel of Christ. You must

must all have read the consequence of offering up strange fire before the Lord, the matter of Korah must be fresh upon most of your memories.

We believe some of you are ready to reply, that even a Judas probably was instrumental in the conversion of some: We must observe, you take too much upon you when you are led to take this conclusion for granted, it is a circumstance Scripture is silent about, and from multitudinous passages in holy writ, we are authorised to dissent from this your gratuitous inference. In allusion to the Day of Judgment, our Lord observes, that there should be many who should say on that day, Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works; to which proposal he represents himself as replying, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity: And though this seems rather to infix a charge of discountenance on such preachers, rather than on their hearers, yet we proceed now to quote some passages which affect the latter, and to establish the doctrine we feel ourselves bound to inculcate. Moses, to ingratiate himself with the people to whom he was directed, has this manifestation of his commission put into his mouth, I AM hath sent me unto you: Refer likewise to the

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whole of the 28th chapter of Jeremiah: And though it may appear unaccountable to you that Devils should be cast out by false Prophets, as already recited, if you will refer to the account of the conjuration of the seven Sons of Sceva the Jew, recorded in the Acts, you will read somewhat of a similar nature: What good can accrue from affixing the name of Jesus to a false commission? Is the staff of Elisha in the hand of Gehazi effectual to recover the dead? Can the uncalled, however they may apprehend the Gospel as a system, preach it with power, with the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, in the Spirit as well as in the Letter? You believe perhaps that such communications from men not sent by the Lord into his vineyard may be of singular service; whence can you support your fancy? The written word of God is totally against it; Satan, in some of these supposed to be converted souls, may politically loose his hold to prevent you, by a contemplation of what you imagine to be a real change, from going in quest of a commissioned and experienced minister: This fiend of darkness can assume the appearance of an Angel of light. It is not sufficient alone that a man should experience the pardon of his sins to constitute him a Priest after the order of Melchizedec: God meets Moses when he delivers to him his com-

commission: He calleth to him whom he will, and gives them a plain intimation that they have his licence: Paul is arrested by a voice from Heaven, and referred to Ananias for further orders; and Ananias, that he may not be ignorant of the instructions he is to deliver to Paul, has a vision declarative of the orders he is to issue out. Ye take too much upon you, you who dare with any thing short of this to burn your incense before the Lord of Hosts. The Prophets of old had each their several visions, or revelations to their souls, that they were ordained to speak in the name of the Lord; by the diffidence of some of them, upon their first calling, it should seem, as if God intended to manifest his divine call of such to these men, and to posterity, since we read how he refrained to punish in the extreme their backwardness to engage in his mission.

It must grieve every considerate Christian, in the present day, when he observes the number of those who speak not of the Lord but of themselves, to the misleading of others and to their own deception: The pardon of sin, and the call to come forth to preach the Gospel, appear, from the tenor of Scripture, to be very distinct and different matters; and though no one ought to undertake the last, without a previous application of the first to

his soul, he who undertakes the last of his own authority, gives the discerning Christian reason for suspicion, that he has not participated of the first; for how shall men preach to the purpose, while they continue unexperienced, which does not often instantaneously follow the pardon of their sin;—how shall they preach except they be sent?

We trust you now begin to feel somewhat like an home application to your consciences, much injury has been done to the cause of Christ, many have been prevented from coming under a lively and searching minister, and so have long sat down contented with a dead discourse, merely from the inconsideration of well-intending Christians, who have unadvisedly reported this or that minister to be a preacher of the Gospel of peace, such latitudinarian assertions are often dangerous, not only for the reasons we have just brought forward, but for the reason of the text; how shall men preach unless they be sent; it is true they may talk or prattle about Jesus, they may make a noise like the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal, they may gratify the itching ear, but if God *sends some Ministers*, it follows they who are unsent by him, will neither be countenanced by him in their persons, nor in their labours. How incumbent a duty is it then on you to petition the
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Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that *he* would send them, and openly discountenance and discontinue the labours of those who advance singly in their own strength. We know of this sort there must be many even among the reputed high professors of the Gospel, or the Scriptures had not so characteristically denounced a woe unto preachers of this stamp and complexion; who are the dumb dogs, who howl indeed, but cannot bark, who may thunder out legal terrors, and drive to despair, or buoy up with a false hope, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, or rob the poor in spirit of the small hope he retains, because he is poor.

Nor would we have you admit for truth, every recital of the conversion of those, who have been brought to an experimental knowledge of truth from this or that preacher: Jannes and Jambres could mimic the miracles of Moses, and the sons of Sceva those of the Apostles; hear for yourself without prejudice on either side if you can, but compare what you hear with the doctrine of the word of God; search the Spirits, receive not the testimony of men alone, least it should turn out to be no better than human evidence,—the witness of God is greater; we pray then that you may be found supplicating the Spirit of truth,

truth, that he would lead you into all truth; that he would not suffer you to listen to error: St. John saith, he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us; and God, if you be his, and are looking up to him, will direct you where you may safely, may comfortably hear: This one circumstance is a matter of greater importance than perhaps is generally supposed even by those who are anxious to attend the Gospel, and are living, as they hope, in union with the Saviour.

If we have said nothing respecting the lives and conduct of ministers, it is because we thought you would be sufficiently apprized on that head from yourselves, that you would, from mere natural reason, be enabled to draw this inference in your own breasts; What fellowship hath Christ with Belial! Indeed there is something so shocking and disgusting in open profligacy, rapacity, and the like, that mankind will hardly look upon it with patience in the simple moral preacher, much less, tolerate the preacher of Christ in whom such evident marks of Satan are found. We thought proper to apprize you of more latent, though not less dangerous abomination, to be dreaded the more for its latency, because it is oftentimes attended with much subtilty, and oftentimes the very minister, in whom it predominates,

dominates, does not account it of that noxious tendency with which the records of truth authorise us to stigmatize it. How often have we heard, when pressing those home who are found exercising the ministerial function, Sirs, have you arrived at this first necessary qualification for such employ, the pardon of your sin in a crucified Jesus, the only answer we have been enabled to extract sometimes to the question has been, we hope we have; but what Prophet or what Priest did ever, as recited in the sacred pages, authorisely take upon himself, on such slight evidences as these, to speak to God's people in the name of their God; it hath already been proved, that the fullest pardon of sin, without further impression on the soul, is not sufficient to constitute the Christian a minister of Christ; and surely where there has no pardon of sin been applied to the conscience, such preacher lacks the first testimonial of his appointment, and is ill provided for the instruction of others in the most necessary of all Christian knowledge, which to be without, or to be deceived respecting, is a state of all others the most deplorable.

We would not terrify, but as the beloved in the Lord, we would warn you: Many false Christs shall arise and deceive many, or in other phrase, many pretenders shall step forth,
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apparently in the service of the Saviour, who have no more vital portion or union with him than Judas, when he dipped his hand with him in the same dish. Some such as these perhaps may vociferate, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we, but not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he, rejoins the Son of God, who doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven; not he then who, *contrary* to my will, and *without* my call, takes upon himself to prophecy in my name, I will say to such men, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity; workers of iniquity, because you have set yourselves to work without my licence and authority.

We may from hence, reprove a practice prevalent among Dissenters from our Established Church, we mean stated lay-conventions, for the purposes of expounding the Scriptures, in which engagement, if a member be found fluent and adroit, this evil consequence often ensues, he is forthwith without any previous call, hurried out as a preacher of the Gospel, but it is the province of "the Lord of the harvest alone to send forth his labourers:" Upon a perversion of these words, "They that fear the Lord spake often one to another," and others of similar import, prayer meetings likewise have been instituted

stituted among these Dissenters; the consequence has often been, that jealousies have arisen among the associators, some have grown proud of their gift in prayer, others have envied them, and some have been offended that they have not been called upon to exhibit their gifts—such conventions are but too often the nurseries of Hypocrisy, and of a proud Spirit: Nor feel we ourselves much inclined to favour those journals, which some faithful ministers of the Gospel have thought proper to pen;—let God register the account on the favourable side, and man enter only the imperfections of his labours, and the opportunities of doing good, which he has omitted.

And here permit me to recall to your attention a fresh argument of considerable importance; the truths of God are uniform and consistent the one with the other; by consequence, the Calvinist and the Arminian cannot both be called of God as ministers of the Gospel; the one or the other is to be withstood to the face, to be refuted, and to be blamed: You will observe the grand outlines of what we deliver to you are of the Calvinistic strain, not that we believe this eminent Reformer to have been infallible, but we are convinced of the fallacy of his opponent, and it is on no other condition that we wish the name of either should be retained;

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tained; as the matter stands, this nominal distinction serves to make a confessed separation in the minds of men, between what is very near the truth, and what is grossly and flagrantly heterodox and erroneous, earthly, sensual, and devilish. You are not called upon to excuse our freedom, the love of Christ constrains us, that love, which if it hath on his part been stronger than death, would be weak indeed on ours, if it were governable and restrainable by human opinion or caprice.—But we must pass on—

If none can preach effectually but those who are sent, it follows of course that none can hear with profit, but those to whom God shall give the willing ear and the understanding heart. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God must give the increase; he is jealous of his honour, and he will not give it to another, not even to his own children; he has, by the voice of the Holy Ghost, expressed himself to be well pleased in Christ; this is my beloved Son, hear ye him: If you do not hear him speaking through the mean of the ministers you attend upon, such attendance will profit you nothing; and if they have taken up a forged commission, it is God's determination they shall not profit his people at all; they strip God of his due, and of his honour, by taking upon themselves the delivery

very of that message he intended to transmit by the tongue of another; and, like Hophni and Phineas, seize upon the Priests portion by force and violence. You will argue, that the abilities of some men evidently denote their acquaintance with the truth; but such acquaintance does not denote experience, nor experience denote singly of itself licence and authority to stand up in the congregation of the faithful. God has no need of any man's natural abilities; this you will hardly deny, when you consider from what low stations the primitive preachers of the Gospel were called: If we except Luke's writings, the diction of the new Testament is in a very moderate style; for the Epistle to the Hebrews, though dictated by Paul, is universally attributed to that Evangelist; it is proveable from its coincidence of phrase with his Gospel, and with the Acts of the Apostles: But to descend to an observation we have been enabled to make in the present day; we have known men of acknowledged abilities stand up for years, endowed in the manner we rehearse, who have not only preached but printed the faith; of such we have a confession from one of them to produce, that he did not preach *faithfully*: He quitted his residence and became in the Pulpit a furious advocate for Arianism, and confessed, that the former doctrines he preached, he by no mean held,

for he in no wise believed them.* Enough has been delivered, we trust, to alarm your consciences: May God apply it by his Grace to your hearts, and you will then have to praise him, that the exertions of a man of weak abilities, have been truly blessed to your souls; that by the foolishness of my preaching, he has saved some of those who believe.

* This alludes to one Robinson, formerly a Calvinistic Preacher in Cambridge, Translator of Saurin's Sermons, and for the last four years of his life an Arian Preacher, at Birmingham.

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SERMON VII.

JEREMIAH CHAP. iii. VERSE 14.

TURN, O BACKSLIDING CHILDREN, SAITH THE
LORD, FOR I AM MARRIED UNTO YOU—

WE purpose to-day to speak a few consolatory words to backsliders; the revolvers from the camp of Israel are not few, and they should not be so generally forgotten as they appear to have been: Men reduced again into the army of the Lord of Hosts, and reinstated into their former rank, are too apt, like the deserters from the armies of temporal Princes, to forget that clemency which restored them, and to neglect speaking of that mercy to others who have decamped, which might in a measure become one mean of reducing such again to Jesus, the great Captain of Salvation: And surely the text holds out as much encouragement to this, as to
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any species of finners; the guilt then of such will be highly aggravated if they return not to their first love, seeing the invitations to return are so manifold, latitudinary, and expressive: Perhaps one reason why so little has been published on this subject, may have been this, it might have seemed to some not immediately necessary to attack this description of offenders, because if the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, it most assuredly will purify the sin of backsliding; which sin, however heinous, cannot exceed in hue the sins of *crimson* and of *scarlet*. If *all* manner of sin and blasphemy, saving the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall be forgiven, it follows that the sin of backsliding shall be forgiven, when men truly again turn to Jesus: For the sake however of some, who perhaps are sinking and fainting in their minds, we will enter deeply and largely into the subject.

Backsliders are of two species; of the one sort was David, who went back after he had received the testimony of God's love in Christ to him by the pardon of his sins: Such as these are sure to be led back again into the rank of the redeemed, because God, who began the good work, will most assuredly perfect it unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not suffer his truth to fail; he will again, as he did in regard to his beloved David,

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come over the mountain of their corruptions, forgive them fully, and love them freely, and reiteratedly manifest to their souls, that the Lord hath put away their iniquity, when they themselves are endowed with the Spirit of contrition and of supplication: This we may observe in the instance of the prodigal son.

But there is another sort of backsliders, and to these we would more immediately address ourselves; we mean those who are barely brought into the light of the Gospel as a system which they acknowledge, and have for some time revered and respected, and conformed in a degree to its rules and principles, expecting Salvation by that and that only; but through surprize, temptation, and their own corruption, have gone back again into the world, and though perhaps they cannot be said to have walked *no more* with God's people, yet has their walk and communion with them been less intimate, and almost to be unaccounted of in comparison of their first junction with them; and this kind of seceders from the tents of Israel is a very common character among the professors of the present day, so that the discriminating and observing Minister of the Gospel may almost in every quarter remark, that the love of many waxes cold.

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We doubt not but there may before us sit some, who may deservedly be ranked under this denomination of revoltors from the people of God, of such we would solicit a patient attention, while we develope their situation and feelings, and recommend to them the things which alone make for their peace. Do you plead guilty to the indictment we have preferred against you? We shall be glad to observe you not totally without feeling; there is then a secret something, we believe, which knocks at your heart, demanding of you, What fruit have you had in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? Be assured the end of those things is death;—if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. Reflections like these we accredit you, poison occasionally the flow of your sinful pleasures, and may momentarily impede their current: And this too is well; your consciences are not as yet seared over with a red hot iron, and upon this presumption it is that we dare encounter you. You have been once enlightened, but though gone back, we are willing to persuade ourselves you have not apostatized, because we see you here present yourselves time after time, where the love of Jesus is held forth, and we trust you still admit the truths of the Gospel, and possess occasionally some secret longing to participate in their comforts, sometimes joined with supplication for their obtainment. Your feelings

feelings we now attempt to describe; and to develope your general experience.

Your conscience was originally wounded under the preached word; it may be sickness or disappointment have brought you under it; you heard with attention, and you admitted it; you were persuaded in your minds that men, apparently earnest in their labours, far from fools in their converse, eminently read in the phrases of Scripture, and blameless in their lives, were better judges of these things than yourself; your confession was just, but your admission of doctrines upon this single foundation was indefensible; you had not examined the Scriptures of God; you had neither adopted meditation nor prayer; and however wise you might be esteemed, you was not become wise for yourself; the knowledge you had gleaned, was neither obtained from the Word, nor from the Spirit of God, it was received only as the command and tradition of men: You abode in the admission of these truths, and was uniformly strenuous in their propagation; you associated with their Defenders, and with them you walked and talked in the House of God, as a man talketh with his friend: Fired with the importance of Gospel truth you came forth an high and vigorous maintainer of it; some you annoyed with verbal reproofs, and others you ridiculed

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for their obduracy and incredulity; but you forgot that he who believeth should not make haste; you were soaring all at once into the Heaven of Heavens: This pride of your's was to receive a check; your progress and profession were not of God; you adopted violence, and were for taking by force, instead of having recourse to mild reason and gentle persuasion; you forgot the question of the Apostle, What hast thou which thou hast not received? Now, if thou receivedst it, Why boastest thou as if thou receivedst it not?

Or it may be, having enjoyed serious impressions, you vowed if God would deliver you from this sickness, or that misery, you would devote yourself entirely to him, forgetting it was your duty to follow him unconditionally; and forgetting likewise, or perhaps being ignorant, that without Jesus you could do nothing, that all your fresh springs were derivable only from him: You must however be made to know and feel your own weakness, that you may discover where your strength lies: Some temptation, it may be that of the sin which easily besets you, entrenches on your path, and assaults you in your progress; the little relish for spiritual delights, which you still retain, begins in a great measure to decline, and your fall is on the eve of commencing: You are now gone
back,

back, we say not into what criminal indulgence; but if it be of that sort which necessarily employs a companion and co-partner in iniquity, your recovery is the more difficult to every human appearance; and if you are not totally senseless, your fault is to your own apprehension the more deplorable.

What then is the natural effect of your declension? You obtain little or no comfort under the preached word; of the promises which you meet with scattered up and down throughout the sacred page, you dare not appropriate one to yourself; its curses you can frequently apply to your own case, and Satan will second your conscience in this appropriation; it is his business to make the breach between God and yourself as wide as possible, and to hurry you on from a fearful looking for of judgment, to desperation and to death. Have you an hope? You are led to conclude it presumption: Do you pray? You are ready to denominate it hypocrisy: Do you sit under the word, and is the preacher faithful? You are apprehensive he levels his rebukes at you: Have you a secret wish to join yourself to the friends of Jesus, and become a member of their society? Conscience tells you to stand aloof, least by their admission of you, their good be evil spoken of, and their ministry be blamed. You sit alone then, like as a sparrow on the house-top, and are,

as an alien in the Church of God, even among your own mother's children. Hours and days you go mourning, bowing down your head like the bulrush; your appetite for Gospel truths is much impaired, and yet you feel without them you cannot know the way of peace; while others under the Word can receive a full measure pressed down and running over, you scarcely can pick up a crumb from under the table. Each individual indulgence in sin, widens your separation from God, and blunts the little desire you feel for a reconciliation with him; it drives you back into your wonted heartlessness and despondency, and impairs the vigour of your supplications and of your hopes. David, doubtless, experienced the same sensations before you; for the experience of every backslider who is not an Apostate is nearly similar; he bemoaned the absence of Gospel consolation, and petitioned God not to take away his Holy Spirit from him, but to restore to him the joy of his salvation: You may read his feelings in the 51st psalm, and it will be to your comfort if you can trace them in the breathings of your own hearts and souls: He too, like you, was got upon the mount, saying in his prosperity he should never be moved; but God soon taught him a far different lesson, and we hope and trust he has likewise

likewise begun to make some of you feel the benefit of this instruction.

Before he receives you into union with him again, he will slay you with thirst to make you hunger and thirst again after righteousness, for till then you shall not be filled: As hitherto, you hold as it were your life in your hand, and your comforts are all at uncertainties; if you have a God to look to, or pray to, it is but in a *partial* sense; your corruptions weigh you down, and unfit you for spiritual exertion; it may be you would step forth a Reprover of others, but conscience annoys your wishes by the faithful admonition—Recover thyself; pluck out the beam which is in thine own eye: For the most part your apprehension of Gospel doctrines is much beclouded and imperfect; you see, in the fullest sense of the word, but through a glass, darkly, and oh how great is that darkness! Receiving but slender consolation from an attendance upon the ordinances of God, and the mean of prayer, you are tempted to lay them aside, but are yet assaulted with the reflection, that the *prayerless* people is ever a *Christless* people: You are fearful, lest your case should eventuate in final apostacy, the irremissible sin, and perhaps it is with your greatest degree of fervency you pray and labour against it; the high-mindedness which led
you

you to your ruin, oh how do you lament its first possession of your soul! And how do you pray and strive against it? In some degree you move in the world like as a child set out upon its first essay to walk, with tremulousness and circumspection. If you be God's, we know some of these several sensations will predominate in your life and conduct; they are the auspices of an intended reunion of your soul to Christ, and at this season, Satan will be particularly engaged against you. We wish to put you upon your guard. When Zechariah was shewn Joshua the high Priest standing before the Lord, Satan stood also at his right hand to resist him; this is the Devil's busy time, the very moment either of his conquest or of his defeat, and he will be sure to employ every engine he is possessed of to maintain the field, because you may be lost to him now for ever.

These are some of the feelings with which the backslider, desirous of returning to his God, will necessarily be exercised; we do not deny but the Hypocrite may be visited with many of them, but we cannot admit that he will experience the whole we have set forth. But we must give you one word of caution—Satan will endeavour to appease you, under your fallen state, with the idea, that if it should please God to bring you back again,
you

you will have obtained a rich portion of Spiritual knowledge; God will have taught you your own inability, and you ought to rest satisfied till God revisits your famishing soul: Remember God's people are not an indolent people; they cry day and night before him, and whatever knowledge you may have obtained by your faithlessness to Christ, it has been dearly bought and hardly earned—That situation in life cannot be enviable, which occasions God to hide away his face from it.

But we must now take a glance at the text, and it comprehends the fullest invitation to men in the unhappy situation you are found, to whom we direct our discourse; it holds out a peculiar call to you, and is an eviction, that the case of every revolter from the Lord is not desperate, though lamentable. The union between Christ and his people is multitudinously through Scripture, represented by symbols taken from an union which obtains between the Human Species, with this single difference, that the Prophet observes of God, that he “changes not, therefore “the Sons of Jacob are not consumed”—and again the same Prophet, for your further encouragement exclaims, that God “hates “putting away.”—“Blessed are they,” in congruence to this declaration, “who are “called to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb!”—We beseech you then, be ye reconciled to
God;

God; by withstanding, you oppose your own convictions, and falsify your own experience; you render that knowledge of your case, which you retain, proportionably useless to you: You go on reasoning upon your case; we would wish you not to reason, but to betake yourselves to diligent prayer; not to ruminate on your malady, but to have recourse to the Physician; the children of Israel did not derive their cure from complaining of the bite of the fiery Scorpion, but from a contemplation of that brazen Serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, and we wish *you* to be constantly looking up to Jesus: You argue you have an obdurate heart; we reply, Jehoshaphat possessed the same before you, the Lord smote him after his revolt, but the correction did not meliorate his disposition; it pleased the Lord however finally to recover him; and Jesus, who is the same to-day and for ever, can both subdue your hearts and that sinfulness you complain of; he shewed himself an able Physician to David, to Jehoshaphat, and to Peter—our text warrants us to hope he will eventuate such to you: Why then will you be industrious in search of arguments against yourself; why will you second the Adversary in his effort to ruin your peace, and your souls; your extremity denotes the propriety of your early application for Spiritual succour; we hope the long suffering

fering of the Lord may lead you to repentance, and we sum up the whole of what we have to offer to you on the subject, with two pointed questions: Do you believe Christ able to save you to the uttermost? And are you not as yet without the confines of Hell?

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SERMON VIII.

DANIEL CHAP. iii. VERSE I.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR THE KING MADE AN IMAGE OF GOLD, WHOSE HEIGHT WAS THREE SCORE CUBITS, AND THE BREADTH THEREOF SIX CUBITS; HE SET IT UP IN THE PLAIN OF DURA, IN THE PROVINCE OF BABYLON.

BEHOLD a Colossus thirty yards high, and three broad, set up by the King of Babylon as an object of public adoration!—Nebuchadnezzar's God is just gotten upon his legs, and that not by his own strength or power, when lo all nations, kindreds, and languages must fall down before it! A pretty everlasting father, newly come out of the hands of the Smith, a wonderful prince of Peace, about whose authority you will read no small stir is to be presently made;—but Nebuchadnezzar is the defender of the Faith on the occasion,

caſion, and no wonder that Princes, Governors, Captains, Judges, Treafurers, Counſellors, Sheriffs, and Rulers of Provinces, come to the dedication of the Image! Do you aſk the reaſon? Nebuchadnezzar the King had ſet it up.—You ſee of what a compliant ſpirit Courtiers are in general; they will not only gather themſelves together, but as the Prophet has it here in the 3d verſe, they will ſtand before the Image, becauſe—Nebuchadnezzar has ſet it up: And we doubt not, ſhould any other earthly monarch ſet himſelf againſt the Lord, theſe ſame rulers would take counſel together with the aforeſaid againſt the Lord, and againſt *his* anointed; hence we gather this uſeful maxim, that religion is not to be generally looked for in Courts or Palaces, or that Courtiers are but the echo and mimic of their monarch: No doubt, on the preſent occaſion, they belied their Conſciences, and laboured to profeſs their Orthodoxy, by declaring this was juſt ſuch a God as Chaldea had long needed: Happy Nebuchadnezzar, whoſe invention could ſo nicely chime in with the wiſhes and neceſſities of his ſubjects!

An herald now makes a proclamation for a general thankſgiving; one ſhould ſuppoſe the people's hearts were not overmuch influenced by devotion, or the proclamation were ſuper-

fluous; it was in manner and form following—“ At what time ye hear the sound of the
 “ cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer,
 “ and all kinds of music, ye fall down and
 “ worship the golden Image, that Nebuchad-
 “ nezzar the King hath set up; and whoso
 “ falleth not down and worshippeth, shall the
 “ same hour be cast into the midst of a burn-
 “ ing fiery furnace !” Such is the establishment
 upon which the religion of the Caldeans rests,
 even the will of an ignorant King, and such
 is their Ecclesiastical Court, which is as much
 as to say, an Idol has just come red hot out of
 the furnace, and the worshippers of Jesus
 must therefore go into the flames—The im-
 mensity of the Image aptly prefigures the
 multiplicity and extensiveness of forms: In
 regard to the people, the moment they hear
 the Church music strike up, they comply with
 the proclamation; but let it be remembered,
 this people is Nebuchadnezzar’s people, who
 were such obedient subjects, that had the mo-
 narch set up Satan, would have fallen down
 and worshipped *him*.

Hitherto all seems to go on according to
 the most sanguine wishes of this sanguinary
 King of Babylon—But mark the sequel—God
 has in every nation under Heaven it seems,
 some who worship *him*, and *him* only serve;
 they are a peculiar people, and shall not es-
 cape

cape the malevolence of Heathens; in the present instance there were certain Jews, three of them in number, whom Satan had a spite against, and the World a quarrel with; and though set over the affairs of the province of Babylon (which is an inflexibility not much to be expected in Courtiers), they would not regard Nebuchadnezzar's trumpery, nor conform to his ungospelled Establishment. By his command, they are summoned before him, but mark the difference between true and false religion—The Idolatrous Monarch is in a rage, and the Saints perfectly calm; his address to this accused triumvirate is sharp, but it is remarkable for the concluding clause, the King demands of them, Who is that God who should deliver them out of *his* hands? Hence we would observe, he had not much confidence in the Omnipotency of his Image, and probably intended it only as a representative of himself.—Alas! What could it do? Its size indeed might strike the beholder with astonishment, and its splendour and symmetry call together a great concourse of people; situated in a plain, it was advantageously placed for the purpose of collecting contiguous spectators, of whom it could be said only, that it was a mercy the Elements did not precipitate the Statue on their heads, and that they were not nearly ground many of them to powder; but the crafty monarch
places

places it not on an eminence, and thus particularly provides against accident.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are finally cited into the Ecclesiastical Court, but it does not appear they are forward to put in an Allegation—No, they confess they are not careful to answer the Royal Surrogate in the matter; they have no doubt but they shall come off clear, and that their accusers shall pay costs of suit; but be it as it will, they profess themselves determined not to conform at the expence of Conscience: How different their conduct to that of the Courtiers! They will not serve Nebuchadnezzar's Gods, nor worship the golden Image which he has set up. The King who before was only in a rage, is now represented to be full of fury, in-somuch, that the form of his visage is changed against these pious Dissenters. The Devil and himself hold a council, the result of which is, the furnace is commanded to be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated: Now Satan and the King expect a triumph; but the cunning and the crafty, we would observe, are not always wise; the counsel of the most prudent is brought to nought, when God has a purpose of his own to bring forward in opposition to them; and it is no wonder, that men, enlisted in the service of the Devil, should expire in the exercise of their

their fidelity by a devilish end; no marvel then, that the flame of the fire slays those men who impiously take up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

This persecution of the Babylonish King determines, as we hope many of the persecutions of the King of modern Babylon may hereafter do, that is to say, in the deliverance of God's Saints; for we can consider this overgrown Chaldean, as no other than the type of his successor in office, the hell-hound of Rome, with this modest difference, in that the Babylonian set up the Image of his own authority, without pretending, like the Ephesians, that it came down from Jupiter, or, like the Papist, that it was set upon its legs by miracle.

Observe now the inconsistency of wickedness; Nebuchadnezzar, who a while before was forcing the Divinity of his Idol down the consciences of his court, now begins to preach Jesus Christ, and he does it in language which must demand attention; for he puts this question to his Counsellors, who probably were very active in the business, Did we not cast three men bound into the fire? And scarcely waiting for an answer, *he returns the answer to himself*—Lo, I see four men walking in the
midst

midst of the flame, and the form of the fourth is like *the Son of God*! Herod in after ages does something like this, when on his hearing of the miracles of Christ, he denies a tenet of his Sadducism, by exclaiming, It is John the Baptist who is risen from the dead—We doubt not but some few centuries ago several of those, who for their fidelity to Jesus Christ were hailed from the prison to the fire, felt the presence of their Lord so immediately, and intimately with them, that they experienced little of that flame, which was all the while consuming their bodies.

But to proceed—Nebuchadnezzar's sermon does not determine here; for he brings forward to view the existence of God the Father, in calling upon the objects of his late persecution, under the title of Servants of the *Most High*; but his Orthodoxy does not expire with this declaration, he attaches a doxology to it, and blesses the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We are sorry however to add, that this Babylonish Prince makes a worse conclusion, in thundering out an anathema against all who should speak any thing amiss of the God of the Jews; in this he is faithfully followed, as far as they dare, by the Papists of the present day; however the practice of the Apostles was of quite a different temperament; they left such to themselves,
and

and only shook the dust off their feet, as a testimony against them. But do you not discover in this Idolatry of Nebuchadnezzar, somewhat like an anticipation of the present system of Catholicism; surely Nebuchadnezzar can be esteemed only as a precursor of the Pope of Rome; an exaltation of self appears to be the ultimate design of both parties, their persecutions are equally violent and ungospelled, and ought by every serious Minister to be strenuously opposed.

Did the Governor of Chaldea set up *his* Image? Is it not to be feared the Governor of each several country pledges himself to uphold an Establishment, for which he can produce no greater authority than this idolatrous Predecessor? Is not this an exaltation of the Constitutions and Commandments of Men, in opposition to the Teachings of the Spirit?—To avoid the inconveniencies resultory from such tame acquiescence, we would refer you to the word of God; all profess, who seek to found any religion, that they derive their authority from Divine Revelation; and it will be to your shame and confusion, who pretend to dissent from them, if you are not adroit at handling those spiritual arguments, which lead you to differ on such occasions. We contend not for any form of worship, if we have occasionally quoted any

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article

article from our own Church, it hath been under the fullest conviction, that such article might be defended from Scripture authority. We respect no Church, any further than she is supported and countenanced by the Scriptures of God; neither, Nebuchadnezzar like, do we set up our own opinion as the guide of others, further than such opinion can be so defended as we have already spoken.

You deem some of you perhaps the conduct of this Idolatrous Babylonian exquisitely unaccountable, ignorant it may be of what passes in your own hearts day by day: Among many who preach the Gospel, we are well aware jealousies of this nature and kind obtain;—some of these serious Ministers cannot rejoice heartily, when they hear one of Christ's flock is led to the knowledge of Jesus, by the preaching of others than themselves; how do they esteem such a conversion as an intrenchment on their own territories, and give the considerate Christian just reason to conclude, that self-interest, or importance, is pretty much concerned and rooted in the heart of the Gospelian Minister. How few are there in the present enlightened age, who can join Paul in his declaration, that so Christ be preached, they are unconcerned from what motive, and can give the right hand of fellowship to the faithful

faithful servants of a crucified Redeemer, regardless of the Church to which such belong.

Did Nebuchadnezzar set up an Image? We are fearful very many of you also have set up an Idol, a favourite opinion in your own hearts, which you venerate with no less devotion, impatient of contradiction, abhorrent of controul; disputation respecting this favourite opinion however must be given up, if it be a non-essential of Religion, before you can claim the title of a fair, a candid, and a dispassionate Christian. Every age and nation has more or less declined from the purity of Christianity, into opinions tending to the introduction of Idolatry, into an establishment of, and insisting upon, the admission of the Doctrines of men; in proportion as mankind have lost sight of and communion with Jesus, these fooleries have obtained, which should put us upon our guard in our adoption of religious tenets, and in soul concernments at least make man cautious how he puts confidence in man. We aim our blows at no one sect, system, or party; we ingenuously confess, we might justly level them at very many, and at our own; were this pure, perfect, and irreproveable, the worldly and the carnal would not step forth, as we observe them very often doing, strenuous advocates in its defence; the carnal mind

favoureth not the things which be of God, neither indeed can it know them, because they are spiritually discerned. When Moses, the type of the Redeemer, protracted his stay in the Mount, his people fell into the adoration of a calf, and we find even a Priest of God had a very principal hand in the erection of this abominable Church; it is only by the revivification of our spiritual Moses, that Error and Herefy can subside among his worshippers, when he comes down and possesses the souls of his people, non-essentials, as well as open and avowed error, will be uniformly given up, and Christ become "all in all."

From various parts of the Prophetic writings, and particularly from the book of Revelations, we are authorised to expect an arrival of this happy æra; from what we observe transacting in a neighbouring nation (we mean France), we conclude the period to be at no great distance; Priest-craft seems to be rapidly declining; the blaze and splendor of it to be extinguishing together with the sepulchral Lamp in their churches; those who heretofore have been accustomed tamely and implicitly to resign their consciences to Priests, appear now to be getting very fast into the habit of thinking for themselves: We prognosticate much good from the change
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the Scriptures will cease any longer to grow musty upon our shelves from disuse; the knowledge at least in the letter of them will be generally disseminated; and it will be soon deemed a shame to remain ignorant of their import. Christ and the Doctrines of Grace will be more uniformly brought forward to view, and we hope Antichristian prejudices may more generally decline.

We look forward to this happy season, in which we are told, the Earth shall be filled with the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea; when the Sword shall be beaten into a Plough-share, and the Spear into a Pruning-hook, and the Nations shall learn War no more: The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this! I trust very many of you before me will heartily join me, with reference to this happy season, in the request, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Thou, O God, hasten it in its time! Accomplish this thy Work in the midst of the years!

SERMON IX.

ISAIAH CHAP. xl. VERSE II. 2.

COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH
YOUR GOD—SPEAK YE COMFORTABLY TO JE-
RUSALEM, AND CRY UNTO HER, THAT HER WAR-
FARE IS ACCOMPLISHED, THAT HER INIQUITY
IS PARDONED, FOR SHE HATH RECEIVED OF THE
LORD'S HAND DOUBLE FOR ALL HER SINS.

IT would be a task of no small difficulty,
to attempt to select any two verses from the
Old Testament, characterized by a larger dis-
play of Gospel Doctrines, than the words we
have just read to you ; we proceed to an im-
mediate consideration of them.

It is one grand business of a Christian Mi-
nister to hold out consolation to the people
of God, from whence the Gospel is properly
denominated Glad Tidings, and the Gospel
of Peace ; it is presumable then, from the
opening

opening of the text, that God's children are subject to much dismay, inquietude, and darkness of soul; if whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth, it will of course follow, that there is no individual of his who has not his Times of Sorrow; you read this truth in the history of every Saint recorded in the sacred Scriptures; what dejection of soul attached itself to a very eminent one, may be perused in those pathetic and plaintive lamentations, which are dispersed up and down throughout the book of Psalms.

But there is something peculiarly remarkable in the words, *saieth your God*; now if the God who speaks be not your God, how can you administer any just consolation to the people described? How, in the language of the Apostle, can you comfort them with those consolations wherewith you yourselves are *not* comforted of God? To such we speak, in the words of Job, Miserable comforters are ye all! It will arise then out of our argument, that it is one duty of a pious pastor to be careful to discriminate who are God's people; he is not sent to speak peace to the children of the wicked one, to prophesy smooth things; the promises of the Gospel belong only to as many as the Lord our God shall call: And here it may be observed, that there
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is no doubt but Satan has his Priests, who deal out their hellish consolation to *his* children, who sew pillows to mens arm holes, and cry peace when there is no peace; it is the province of the wicked one to lull the sinner asleep, and to preserve his own as secure as possible from every religious alarm.

We go on—Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem—now this Jerusalem was an hardened city, by the hands of the wicked inhabitants of it was the Son of God crucified: After his resurrection, one of the first commands our Lord gave his Disciples was, that they should begin preaching the Gospel at Jerusalem—what amazing love, he sends them to preach it to his murderers! but then, as you will see in the 2d chapter of the Acts, of such were *his* people; he had kindly just before commissioned Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, to go and inform his Disciples, and his denier Peter in particular, that he was risen: How careful does he appear to have been to provide consolation for the comfortless troubles sake of the needy; doubtless Peter was under peculiar heaviness of heart, bemoaning his own guilt, and the absence of his Lord.

But the Prophet is not commanded only to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, but to cry
also,

also *to cry aloud*, as he has it elsewhere, to lift up his voice like a trumpet, to make himself heard; and he is not only *to cry comfortably*, but the proclamation is put into his mouth—that her warfare is accomplished: By this we are to understand the finished salvation of sinners by the death of Jesus on the Cross, to that the Prophet alludes; for though it had not taken place in time, it had been executed in the Almighty purpose from the foundation of the world. Here was nothing then required of God's people, but to accept of it as unconditionally as it was tendered—no more vain oblations were required—neither ceremonies nor sacrifice, nor yet obedience to the Moral Law as a preparative to such reception of this gift; the promise was without money, and without price: But if the Prophet was commissioned only to cry unto God's people, it follows that he was not, as Arminians vainly conclude, to preach forgiveness of Sins to all the Globe; the supposition is contrary to this declaration, and the whole tenor of the Gospel—No, it is the Iniquity of *Jerusalem only* that is pardoned, *her* iniquity as it is stated in precise terms.

By the phrase Jerusalem, it is plain through a recurrence to the context, that we are to understand, in general language, the people of God there or elsewhere; not solely the in-

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habitants of that city, but men in every age and of every nation who are accepted of God—that the declaration could not be confined *literally* to Jerusalem, is hence apparent; in that Pilate professed, he could find no manner of fault in Jesus, which, in its proper significance, was a declaration put into his mouth by the Spirit of God, implying, that he could not read his Sins and Iniquities laid upon Christ—No, he died for those of this ungrateful City, who exclaimed, His blood be upon us, and upon our Children! which, though they vociferated it in malevolence and ignorance, had a marvellous congruity with the blood sprinkled upon the lintel and the two side posts of the door, as recorded in the 12th chapter of the book of Exodus.

The interpretation of the last clause of my text has been much bandied about and disputed. Speaking of Jerusalem, Isaiah pronounced, in the authority of the Spirit of God, that she had received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins; by the phrase *Double*, a double portion of Grace has been generally understood; now, though we admit that wherever God purposes to give Glory, he will also give Grace; yet we are emboldened to assert, that the Prophet had no such meaning in his eye, when he penned the
above.

above promulgation. The import of his words we thus develope; it was not intended in the Almighty purpose, that man should stand in his primitive innocence, even Angels themselves are charged with folly, of whom it is said, that they are made and constituted Spirits, what then could have been expected of man, but that he should decline, when he was formed of inferior materials, of the Earth, earthy; having sinned, he lost his claim to the Garden of Eden, his terrestrial Paradise; but let it be remembered, that having sinned, he was supplied with a Saviour, through whom he might lay claim to a residence in the mansions of Heaven; by how much then Heaven is preferable to the Garden of Eden; by so much does the first Adam, and every pardoned Sinner, receive double for all his sins. Less than this explication seems hardly to afford an idea on which the imagination of the Christian can repose itself.

We proceed now to apply the text to your benefit. We have stood up, we hope some time, a comforter among you; *you* we mean who are God's people; it was to *you only* our message has been directed; it is high time now we should demand of you, are ye his people? John is express to this purpose: "We know
" that we have passed from death unto life,
" because we love the brethren," that is to

say, the souls for which Christ died; it is not hereby implied, that you admire their consistency, applaud and reverence their assiduity; but the grand question is, do you love them, because Jesus has manifested his affection towards them; if you do thus much, whether you feel it or no, we dare pronounce of you that your Estate is, or will eventuate blessed; we have tried you by the words of a Disciple unusually beloved of Jesus, of one who could therefore more immediately descant with energy and propriety on the subject of Christian Love; we recommend it to you to try yourselves by his rule, by this maxim prove your own selves, examine your own selves; if we speak peace from the pulpit to souls you are best aware whether you may appropriate it or no. May He who searcheth the Spirits enable you to search your's; and may the search issue in a conviction, Gosselly founded, that you are God's people, a portion of his Jerusalem whom we have undertaken to console, as *saiib your God!* If you be already brought into nearness with him, you will feel it recorded, as with a sun-beam on your consciences, that your warfare is accomplished, as we have described, and that your iniquity is pardoned; this reflection will occasionally invigorate you during your pilgrimage, and act like a cordial upon your spirit and upon your heart.

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But we must speak a word to those who as yet remain strangers to this happy union with Jesus; not but that what we have professed *already* may, through his blessing, convey instruction even to *this* species of our fellow-creatures; we do not tell such of you, you *may* come to this saving knowledge of Jesus if you *will*, but as it ought to be put, if you *will*, you *may* come; the people of God are a willing people we allow, but let it be remembered, it is only in the day of God's power; much injury has been done to the cause of Christ by the publication of *General Calls to the unconverted*; men have been taught thereby too often to conclude, that their strength is reposed in themselves, and to lose sight of that cheering consolation of Jesus, "No man can come unto me unless the Father draw him;" some have been driven to work and to labour, but have been compelled to pull down the edifices they have erected; some have been driven to despair, others into blasphemy, and few, but very few, to the feet of Emanuel, because they have been set a going on improper motives.

But, Sirs, do any such as you here before us feel your need of a participation in the comforts we preach? Do you experience in your hearts a longing desire after them? It was the exclamation of David, As the hart
panteth

panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my heart after thee, O God! We do not expect you already feel this latter sensation to its full extent, but it may be you have a secret wish to be possessed of it; if you cannot pray in full Faith, it may be you are willing and even anxious to be moved so to pray; we predict of your situation, that such as you shall receive hereafter double for all your sins, a robe of Righteousness instead of your filthy Garment spotted by the flesh, and spiritual Delights instead of your present carnal indulgences; he who hath promised to cast out none who come to him, is both willing and able, he also will do it.

Of these *General Calls* we have been discoursing about, we have to observe, they have been invariably founded upon portions of sacred writ, torn totally from the context, and by consequence applied to purposes foreign to the intent for which they were penned by the inspired writers; instead of being brought forward to acquaint man with his own weakness, BAXTER and others have employed these to an opposite purpose, to persuade man that he had some strength in himself, and might, in a degree, account of himself as his own Guardian, than which no greater violence can be done to Scripture, nor a more audacious lie be forged on the Spirit of God:

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In mercy, the Holy Spirit has made the reading even of publications of this nature a blessing to some, by leading them, through a conviction of their fallacy, to an application to another quarter; sometimes to an investigation of more Gospelled Authors, sometimes to an enquiry into the Tenor of the Scriptures themselves, sometimes to a recourse to a faithful Minister, and ever finally to diligent and fervent prayer: That this has often been the result of such perusals, sanctifies not the perusal itself: "Take heed," says our Lord, "*how ye hear,*" and we may add, take care *what you read*; the eyes as well as the ears are conduits to the heart. The CALLS we speak of are properly denominated the Calls of their several *Authors themselves*, not the invitation of God speaking through *such* medium to the consciences of men: Do they write to you on the subject of the Spirit of God? Be assured it is the Author *on* the Spirit of God, not the Spirit of God *in* the Author; but we look forward with pleasure, and we trust, with no distant expectation, when POPERY and her ARMINIAN SISTER shall take their final slumber in the dust.

We will refer again to our text: Comfort ye, my people, saith your God—the people of God alone are called upon to console his
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own people, that is to say, those only are called upon to comfort *his* people, who, addressing him through the Spirit of God, can say Abba Father, and feel not simply that they are interested in the Triune God, but that the Triune God is interested in their behoof; that comfort and consolation which is derived only from an head knowledge of the Doctrines of Salvation, as God has given us no authority to rest upon it, so we have no ground for trusting to it.

And now, my friends, whither are some of you fleeing for comfort? The text points out the only source of consolation, and are you directing your views thitherward? If God speaks peace to your souls, of the increase of *such* peace, there shall be no end; it is a peace descending upon you, for the sake of a covenant Christ; and however unworthy you may be in yourselves, God is satisfied with his Son, so that if you are Christ's, remember Christ is God's; it is for Jesus's sake even they who are ignorant of the efficacy of his precious blood-shedding, enjoy the comforts of this life; and one should suppose, in this day of Universal Gospel Illumination, it were unnecessary to add, that it is for his sake alone too any of us can be constituted recipients of the blessings which are to succeed

ceed it; we preach, and have only preached consolation in and through *his* name, in whom all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses: And will you remain strangers any of you to your only prospect of felicity? If you perish, think not to alledge it was because the Gospel of God did not extend to you sufficient ground whereon to erect a comfortable expectation; think not to say it was because you were not indulged with a sufficient intimation by your Ministers; it has been the labour of the poor babbler before you, incessantly as opportunity has served, to point you to a Saviour; but has his labour been as uniformly seconded by your prayers? You may perhaps, very many of you, have felt the truth of the Doctrines of Grace, with an acknowledgment as universal as your Pastor; but has this knowledge invariably driven you to apply to a throne of Grace for a Revelation of your Interest in them? O sirs, if it has not, what are you better than men who are knowingly reposing on the verge of a precipice, of whom, if they perish, it must be universally allowed, that their perdition is just: You argue perhaps some of you, that you have penetrated far into the territories of Licentiousness, much too far, according to your natural apprehension,

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sion, to be encouraged to return : The words we have borrowed from the Prophet, authorize neither you nor me to make any such exception ; it appears they might with safety have been preached to Manassch, and to Mary Magdalene, and who shall assert that we have no authority to address them to the *worst* character under this roof ?

We implore you, if it be possible, cease to continue self-tormentors ; the employ is unprofitable, and equally ungospelled : Are you terrified by the multiplicity of your sins ? May such horror inherit its proper effect—May it compel you to solicit relief where only it can be found, *at the Lord's hand*, who has promised to *his*, *Double for all their sins !*

Are you willing to become his supplicants on the occasion ? This is one happy preface in your favour ; some of you perhaps may have been long thus employed ; be it remembered he hath declared he will reject *none* who approach him according to the Terms of the Gospel ; the parable of the unjust Judge is authority sufficient for your continuance in fervent supplication, and the comment Christ has passed upon it, conveys a promise nearly equal to a possession of the reality :

reality: Unbelief we discover is your grand adversary: But do you combat it upon your knees? —O then God hath promised to avenge you of your adversary—he hath recorded it, that he will avenge you speedily!

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SER-

SERMON X.

GENESIS CHAP. xxii. VERSE 1.

AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS,
THAT GOD DID TEMPT ABRAHAM—

THE Old Testament is but as it were a preface to the New; or, as I may say, the New is but the Key or Supplement to the Old; we may observe of them, that they resemble the woof and warp of the Saviour's Vesture, woven with one texture throughout, devoid of seam or disunion. It often delights us to trace as it were the golden age of primæval Gospel simplicity, and to recur back to these primitive annals.—We view Abraham on this occasion as a representative of God the Father, and Isaac as a type of Jesus.

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Some of you perhaps will be staggered with the opening of the History we are about to consider, since it commences with a phrase so totally foreign to the language of Scripture, when applied to the Supreme; God we know by an Apostle cannot be *tempted* of evil, neither *tempteth* he any man; the phrase should be softened, and rendered thus, God *tried* Abraham; God in the book of Deuteronomy and elsewhere, speaks of *trying* his people to humble them, and to prove them. This chapter opens with the words, after these things, what these things were we have no time to recapitulate; we trust you are not entirely ignorant of what they were, and you may at your leisure refresh your memories with a research into them: We must pursue and apply the history before us—

God thus addresses the good old Patriarch—
 Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt offering: Here now Abraham gives a proof of his faith and obedience; he did not begin to parley with the command, and reason thus, What, my Son, *my only Son*, cannot Ishmael be accepted in the stead; must it be too *the Son whom I love*? We may suppose Justice addressing God the Father in words correspondent to those in which God spake to Abraham, and demanding the execution of his
 Son

Son Jesus, as a propitiation for the sins of his people; and in this the Christian may hear God exclaiming, Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd! Abraham arises early in the morning; this shews the willingness with which he hastened to perform the pleasure of the Lord; he communes not with flesh and blood, nor human passions; he does not possess Sarah his Wife of the intended sacrifice, but saddles his ass, and sallies forth; perhaps the term saddles his ass, may have some reference to that relation in the Gospel, which represents Jesus, the meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, and on the beast probably was the Son of Abraham seated; if he clave the wood for the burnt offering, we consider it as referring to the preparation made by God the Father, expressed by David, as in the person of the Mediator—a body hast thou prepared me!

On the third day Abraham lifted up his Eyes; he had often, during his journey, we doubt not, lifted up his heart; the term third Day, perhaps may have a peculiar connection with that third Day when Christ should rise after his interment; it can scarcely be denied, but this was the thing prefigured by the recital of this incident. The Father of Isaac addresses his Servants, and orders them to abide where they were, that he might not, by their interference, be prevented from fulfilling

filling God's purpose: Nor can we accuse him of falsity when we read his assertion, that he and the lad would go and worship and *come* again to them: The Apostle to the Hebrews has observed, that Abraham accounted God was able to raise up Isaac even from the dead; and we add, that this eminent Saint could not be accused of murder; for he had received the promise of God, that in Isaac should his seed be called. If he laid the wood upon Isaac his Son, we behold in this figure Christ bearing his Cross; but Oh to what extremity was the latter reduced by previous sufferings from the Scourge and the Crown of Thorns, that a substitute must be found to support the weight; Oh how superlative were Christ's sufferings!

The succeeding verse contains something peculiarly affecting; Isaac addresses his Father, the Father replies, here am I, my Son; wherever God the Father is, be sure the Son is a Concomitant: The words which we have pronounced to be immediately affecting are these, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the Lamb for a burnt offering? And they recall to our mind the exclamation of a greater than Isaac, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done! The acquiescence of Isaac to his natural Father, aptly

aptly prefigures the compliance of Jesus to the will of his heavenly Father. Abraham and his descendant go both of them together, and as it is recorded, how can two go together unless they be agreed? Thus the unity of the type and the reality are pointed out: The words, they went both of them together, are recited in the verse preceeding, hinting plainly at the unanimity which subsisted between God the Father and God the Son. Behold the beloved Saints of God arrived at the place God has told them of; they have God's direction in their Eye during the whole course of their progress; thus our Lord, just before he was apprehended, demands of his persecutors, Whom seek ye? and answers to their reply, I am he; he was taken by no compulsion, but willingly resigned himself; therefore, says he, let these go their way. Indeed the correspondencies between the chapter under our present consideration, and the whole process of the apprehension, and condemnation of Christ, are so striking, that it would be Infidelity to assert, that the one did not prefigure the other.

The reply of Abraham to this interrogatory of Isaac, Where is the Lamb? abundantly bespeaks the intention of the Eternal Father, which was to be evidently confirmed in after ages, by a full and compleat sacrifice once
for

for all. They are now hastening to the place God has told them of, and on their arrival, the Father addresses himself to the proposed sacrifice; the silence of Isaac and his compliance on the occasion, beautifully correspond with the description of the submission of Jesus, as painted by the Prophet, who depicts him led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers; dumb, not opening his mouth: But here mark the difference, an Angel stays the uplifted hand of the Patriarch, alas what could the death of Isaac do toward the procurement of the Pardon, either of the sins of others, or of his own; less than the sacrifice of Jesus could not satisfy Divine Justice, and God will permit nothing to be executed in vain, when himself and his commands are alone looked up to; lay not thine hand upon the lad, was the exclamation of the heavenly messenger upon the occasion, this was Christ himself no doubt, because he acknowledges Abraham had not withheld his only Son *from him*; the words are, thou hast not withheld thine only Son *from me*.

The Patriarch, in a flow of gratitude, lifts up his eyes, and beholds a Ram caught in a thicket by his horns; as the Ram is the Father of his flock, Jesus is the Father of his people; as the one was entangled by the
R thorns,

thorns, Christ was in after times to be crowned with thorns; if Abraham *lifted up* his eyes, the Saviour was crucified on an eminence, on Mount Calvary, opposite to Mount Moriah, where Isaac was intended to be sacrificed; get thee *into the land of Moriah*, says the Spirit of God, that is being interpreted, into the land of *bitterness*, or *myrrh*; to quell the sufferings of Jesus, he was presented as Mark records, with wine mingled with *Myrrh*; but he, unlike to Isaac, must not evade the extremity of suffering; when he tasted thereof he would not drink.* If the Ram was captured by the briars and thorns, the people of God may behold, in this description, Christ, who was made a curse for them, for "that which bears briars and thorns is nigh unto being cursed!" The Saint of God having fulfilled his commission, now returns to the young men according to his promise, he sat out in faith, in full confidence in God; and speaking the language of Faith, he well knew it could not be frustrated, but that he should

* We are fearful the culprit who leaps from the scaffold with a view to shorten his sufferings, precipitates himself to hell by suicide: Refer to Mark xv. 23—The Martyr in the flame, who knowingly permits combustible matter to be added to the faggot, with a view of shortening his torments, possesses not a full confidence, that Jesus will be with him as he was with the three children in the flames, and we are doubtful of his Estate—"Let patience have her perfect work!"

return

return according as he purposed—We would now take a general review of the history, and succeed it with a few home applications.

If it be urged that this command of God, contradictory to his own Law, stands as a single instance in Scripture, we reply, that we meet with another in the book of Hosea, in which that Prophet represents himself as having received command of God to unite himself to an Adulteress, though such union be contrary to the uniform Doctrines of both the Old and New Testaments, “Be ye not unequally yoked with Unbelievers:” In both instances, something peculiar was proposed to be typified, and for such purposes the Divine Legislator may dispense with a non-observance of his Legislation; indeed such proceeding can be termed no other than a *temporary repeal*, or *secondary Legislation*. That zeal of Phineas in slaying the Adulterous Zimri and Cozbi, honoured and commended by the Spirit of God, may be enumerated among those instances in which God apparently departs from his usual proceedings; perhaps this was done to shew the difference between the justice of Moses’ Laws and the mercy of the Gospel dispensation, and should be conferred with the conduct of our Saviour in regard to the Woman which was taken in adultery by

the Pharisees, and brought to him for condemnation.

Whatsoever was written before time, was professedly written for our learning, that we, through consolation of the Spirit, might have hope; and surely the history before us is pregnant with the most exuberant comfort to the Children of God. In early ages this was only a type of good things to come, but how superlatively have we been indulged, who have enjoyed the relation of the type and of the substance; to us in the present day the Salvation has been sent more home, which renders the repetition of signs, wonders, and miracles, irrequeftible and unnecessary: God has now *in very deed* "spoken unto us by " his Son."

Doubtless Abraham well apprehended the life of his Isaac to be forfeited for Sin; this was sufficiently proved in after times, or he had not finally yielded up the Ghost in common with the Children of Mortality: And are you, my friends, as willing to relinquish your darling sins, as the faithful Patriarch was content to be separated from the object of his affections? Would you be blessed with faithful Abraham, and prove yourselves heirs of the promise as Isaac was? Compare the
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tenor of your lives and practices with the history before you: How beautifully does this eminent Saint of God, anticipate the words of Jesus recorded by the Evangelist, There is no man that hath left *children* for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold *now*, in *this time*, even children; and to shew that God was ever true to his purposes, and at unity with himself, the Angel of the Lord calls to Abraham out of Heaven a second time, declaring, that because he had not withheld his *only* Son from God, that he would therefore *multiply* his seed, as the Stars of Heaven, and the Sand upon the Sea Shore, which declaration, whether we confine it simply to the relation itself, or view it in the light of a promulgation, that by the incarnation of Jesus, other nations besides the Jews should be favoured with a preached Gospel, is both ways pregnant with the most exalted encouragement.

We observe Abraham arose *early* in the morning; with what alacrity does he fall out in obedience to the commands of a faithful Creator! He, with *his own hands*, saddles the As, and cleaves the wood; he does not appear to have possessed Sarah of his purpose—No, as we have observed, he straightway communed not with flesh and blood, he knew
him

him to be cursed who did the work of the Lord negligently: When God tried him, the command was, Take *now* thy Son; this perhaps took place in the evening preceeding, and the servant of God doubtless waited with ardent longing for the peep of dawn, deeming his delay grievous; probably he left Sarah in a deep sleep; he seems to have given way to no opportunity which might retard his progress, and even momentarily intercept his fidelity to his Lord: Probably he might know what God intended to hold out in after ages by the circumstance he was about to be engaged in, and if so, how careful was he to forward, as far as in him lay, the preaching of the Gospel: Are any here before God as assiduous in their endeavours to provide for the spiritual comforts of their successors?

We have hazarded a conjecture, that Abraham might have possessed some presentiment of God's gracious design, when he was called out to bear his part in this typical prediction of that Saviour who was to come into the world; thus Moses when he slew the Egyptian, supposed his brethren would have understood how that God, by his hand, would deliver them.

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And now what sacrifice have any of you present made to God; we fear some of you have not given him your hearts in the meanest acceptation of the term; if you have done it to its full extent, you are no mean Christians—to alarm those who seem to think Christianity an easy lesson, we would call upon them to point from the Scriptures of God, an instance exhibiting any individual Saint living totally at his ease; Abraham is first called out to separate himself from his family, and next he is to separate the child of his old age from his affection, and from his presence—If David slays the Lion, there remains yet to subdue both the Bear and the Philistine; if Daniel be exalted, he must pass through the Den of wild beasts to splendor; and we must wade through much self-denial, affliction, and disappointment, if we would arrive at Heaven, that Haven where we doubt not you would all be: Our case is not singularly hard; in some respects it is easier than that of our predecessors the Saints—we have their history for our encouragement: Oh that we had their faith for our support! Without this valuable qualification, their history will but accuse us of infidelity, and enhance our condemnation.

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Whatever other sacrifices we may be called upon to make for the sake of the Gospel, this at least it is our bounden duty to put in force, to part with the right eye, the right hand, and the right foot, the sin which easily besets us; and not with this only, but with each several impediment which may let and impede us in our Christian warfare: It may be, Abraham was at this season, when called upon to offer his Son, more than usually attached to his person; the Spirit of God seems to indicate thus much, by these forcible expressions of *thy Son, thine only Son, whom thou lovest*. We read, that an Angel arrested the uplifted hand when it was about to fall upon the victim; and how forcibly does this impress upon the mind of the reflecting Christian that doctrine couched in the Prophet, that no man can give the fruit of his body for the Sin of his Soul; none can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.

Hence may we learn the invaluable price of the Soul, and the immense account which ought to be set upon An Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven! The time would fail us were we to bring forward every improvement the Chapter before us might authorize us to advance: May that Spirit who indited
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it for our comfort, bless what has been urged, and supply you with all needful information, by superadding the teachings of his Spirit, to these our sincere, but imperfect labours—for Christ's sake. AMEN.

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SERMON XI.

GENESIS CHAP. XXIV. VERSE 67.

AND ISAAC BROUGHT HER INTO HIS MOTHER SARAH'S TENT, AND TOOK REBEKAH, AND SHE BECAME HIS WIFE, AND HE LOVED HER: AND ISAAC WAS COMFORTED AFTER HIS MOTHER'S DEATH.

BEHOLD in Abraham again a lively representation of God the Father, and in Isaac a second time a no less vigorous type of Jehovah Jesus: Under the characters of these two persons of the Holy Trinity, we are about to consider them, while we apply the chapter before us to its correspondencies in the New Testament, and to various other parts of the writings of Inspiration.

Abraham seeks a partner in marriage for his Son Isaac, and in this we are led to turn
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our thoughts to that Parable, in which it is recited, "A certain King made a marriage for his Son." At the period we are about to commence our researches, it is recited Abraham was old, and well stricken in age, in correspondence to this declaration, God the Father existed from all eternity. The Patriarch King addresses the confidential servant of his household, doubtless Eliezer of Damascus, whom we can regard in no other sense, than as a strong shadowing out of John the Baptist, who was commissioned to prepare the way for the reception of Jesus.

The Steward of Abraham's house is forbidden to take a wife for Isaac of the daughters of the Canaanites; in the metaphoric style of Scripture, from among the *earthy, sensual, and devilish*; but he is to journey unto the country of Abraham, and to his kindred; in conformity to this commission, John reproves the Scribes and Pharisees, when they assembled themselves to attend his Ministry, in these words, "O Generation of Vipers who hath warned *you* to flee from the wrath to come?" Evidently *not Christ*, therefore *you have no Gospel Invitation*. The servant of this primæval Saint of God, puts a peradventure to his master, that if the woman should not be willing to follow him, "must he needs," rejoins he, "bring Isaac again unto the Land

"from whence his master came?" The answer he receives is, "Thou shalt not bring my Son thither again;" and to this declaration we meet with a consonant one in the New Testament, addressed to the successors of John, "Whoever shall not receive you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them."

Abraham glowing with Faith, next proceeds to assure his domestic, that God shall send his Angel before him, and that a wife should be taken from the spot to which he had directed him. How does every line (I had almost said every word) of Scripture teem with a Gospel Doctrine? By the term Woman, we are in a Spiritual Sense to apprehend the Church, the bride and spouse of the Son of God: Christ will send none of his, on fruitless errands, and we may judge by the effect of the embassy, whether the commission under which Ministers act be Royal; and further, till Christ draws his own, like as it were with the cords of a man, the Church can by no mean run after him.

Did the domestic of Abraham swear to his master, before he was sent forth to execute his master's business, God will demand a solemn dedication of his Ministers to him, and

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to his cause, e'er he will permit them to issue forth in his employment.

Eliezer takes ten Camels of his master and departs; the goods of his master were in his hands; so the Disciples were not of themselves to provide purse nor scrip, the labourer is pronounced to be worthy of his hire.

The Steward of the Patriarch makes his Camels to repose by a well of water, and at the time women go out to draw; the faithful Minister of Jesus will endeavour to repose himself as near as may be to *the well of living water*; and when about to deliver his message, will labour to second the operations of Grace, by selecting a proper situation, and a probable season for the delivery.

In the choice of the people with whom Isaac was to be united, we are supplied with a strong argument in favour of the Doctrine of Election: No man *can* come unto me, says the Son of God, unless the Father draw him.

On the arrival of the Servant without the City, he lifts up his heart in prayer to the God of his master Abraham; let it be observed, with no view to *tempt* God to give him
him

him an answer, impatience and distrust appear to have been no ingredients on this occasion in the disposition of Eliezer; and thereby we gather, that men then alone have an authority to petition any thing of God, when their chief anxiety is, that they may employ it to his honour.

The Damsel intended for Isaac almost instantaneously, "before he had done speaking," presents herself at the well; "she was very fair to look upon." In this she resembles the Church in the character given of her in the Canticles, where she breaks out, "I am black but comely."

Rebekah having given the Camels their water, the token Abraham's man regarded as the indication of God's intention, he proceeds to adorn the Damsel with a golden earring, and with bracelets; in these we anticipate the Churches spiritual ornaments; by the one we apprehend to be implied the "hearing ear," and by the other the hand "to handle the word of life:" God in the 16th of Ezekiel, expressing his love to Jerusalem, says, "I have put bracelets upon thine hands."

The man having enquired of her whose Daughter she was, and if there were room in her father's

ther's house to lodge himself and cattle, receives an answer in the affirmative, which moves him to bow his head and worship the Lord: We are inclined to think this Eliezer would be deemed a very singular character in the present age, and that at least *in this one instance*, his demeanor would have been very unfashionable, but let us remember God's people are "a peculiar people."

In the 27th verse the expression, "I being in the way," seems to have an immediate reference to an expression in the Gospel—Jesus says, "I am the way;" and of Bartimeus, it is recorded that he "followed Jesus in the way;" Eliezer then being *in the way*, no wonder the event of his journey was prosperous.

If it be supposed strange, that Isaac should be ordained to unite himself with a relation, as a representative of the Everlasting Covenant made with Abraham, it is easily to be accounted for; the Ministers of Christ are sent only to seek *his* sheep, "they which are of Faith, the Children of Abraham;" and the Scripture foreseeing, argues the Apostle to the Galatians, that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In *thee* shall all nations be blessed." In short, notwithstanding

standing we receive the whole of this history in its literal sense as a solemn truth, yet we cannot but contend, that it inherited the allegorical meaning we have affixed to it; were the antient records of Scripture thus occasionally developed, and explained, it cannot be doubted, but thereby the Gospel would be more generally disseminated in the letter of it.

At length we view the messenger arrived at his lodging, and supplied with water to wash his feet; this reminds us of the expression of the Prophet, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good things, that publisheth Salvation"—in the verse succeeding, we read there was meat set before him to eat; in the Gospel of Luke we are provided with a parallel: In the same house remain, speaks Jesus to his journeying Disciples, eating and drinking such things as they give. If Eliezer refused to eat before he told his errand, our blessed Lord has given a beautiful explication of it: "Is not the life more than meat?" implying the Spiritual life, typified by that message the Steward of Abraham had to deliver.

Nothing

Nothing peculiar occurs till the 53d verse, in which it is rehearsed, that the Servant brought forth raiment and gave it Rebekah, anticipatory of the wedding garment, the Righteousness of the Saints—She is to go to meet her Lord, and must go thither having on *the wedding garment*.

Her brother and her mother solicit the detention of the Damsel at least ten days ; thus carnal Relations will ever seek to keep off those who are coming to Jesus ; not willing to enter the Kingdom of Heaven themselves, they will seek to keep those from entering who are going in : But Rebekah is finally called, and she consents to go ; God's people are " a willing people in the day of his power ;" they offer him *even themselves* as free will offerings ; " All which the Father hath given me," declares Jesus, " shall come unto me."

The next passage which demands our exposition, opens the last paragraph of the chapter—Isaac came by the well Lahairoi, that is to say, *the well of him that liveth and seeth me* ; how careful were the Saints both under the Old and New Covenants, to denominate their possessions by some pious intitulation, commemorative of the Providences of God ! It is added, he dwelt in the South Country ;

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we elucidate it, under the genial warmth, and influences of God's gracious Spirit—thus the Spouse, "Come thou South wind, and blow
 " upon my Garden, that the spices thereof may
 " flow out!"

If Isaac came out to meditate in the field at even, our Spiritual Isaac expended whole nights in prayer, in the Mount of Olives; if the Son of Abraham after the flesh took his walk in the field, we cannot but conceive that he, in after seasons, alluded to this very field, when in blessing his Offspring, he exclaims, "See, the smell of my Son is as the
 " smell of a field which the Lord hath
 " blessed;" probably in this very field he had been particularly favoured with the presence of God, in instances which the Scripture hath not recorded.

Rebekah having received answer, that it was Isaac who was coming to meet them, lifts up her eyes, and alights from her camel—We lift up our eyes to no purpose, till our Spiritual Isaac gives us the meeting, which will fill us with confusion, and compel us to veil our countenance with shamefacedness; thus the Spouse in the Song, "Look
 " not upon me because I am *black*, because
 " the Sun hath looked upon me;" if we would read the turpitude of our hearts, it
 must

must be by the Light of the Candle of the Lord shining upon us.

If Isaac brought his wife into his mother's tent, what an union is there between this and two other declarations in the Song of Solomon, "He brought me to the banquet-
"ing house, and his banner over me was
"Love"—"I held him and would not let
"him go, until I had brought him into my
"mother's house, and into the chamber of
"her that conceived me."

It is added that Isaac loved her—not *par-*
tially for a time, but "even as the Lord the
"Church," who, "having loved his own
"that were in the World, he loved them
"unto the End.—Thus by a comparison of
Spiritual things with Spiritual, we have been
enabled to preach to you the everlasting Gos-
pel, both from the New and Old Testaments
at one and the same opportunity. We pro-
ceed to aim to apply a few home remarks
to your consciences.

Must Isaac be debarred from an union with
the daughters of the Canaanites? "What
"fellowship has Christ with Belial?" Does
the Servant of Abraham receive his orders
from his Master, previous to his issuing forth
to execute them? Let then others beware

how they fall forth as Champions in the cause of God, uncharged of a peculiar embassy from him for that purpose; whatever may be their intent for engaging in the cause, it is as unseemly as if Eliezer had went out of his own accord; as unlawful as if a subaltern were to take upon himself to head his regiment; it is not sufficient that the message be *godly*, but the message must be *from God*, or you incur the Sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—Did the Steward of Abraham's house address himself to prayer previous to his delivery of his commission? Let none pretend to be Stewards of the mysteries of God, who do not imitate this man's piety!—Having delivered his message, and executed his master's commands, was he anxious to return? To the faithful Minister life only consists in usefulness; having "finished the work which was given him to do," how will he desire "to depart and to be with God," that he may give up an account of his Stewardship: Ah with what exultation have the Patriarch and his domestic met together long since, in that blessed Region of Spirits, where the Servant is free from his Master!—Was Rebekah willing to forsake her kindred and accompany the man to Isaac? Let none dare to conclude themselves blessed with faithful Rebekah, who are unwilling to give up all to pursue Jesus in the way—Did Isaac walk out
to

to meditate in the field at even tide, uniting Godliness with Recreation? Is there any before me who can with truth say, that he lives in conformity to this noble example?—Isaac comes from “the well Lahairoi;” we fear too many who are induced to take their evenings exercise, issue forth from the Tavern: Are any of you disposed like him to meditate in the even, to settle your Spiritual Accounts with God, and thus to keep a conscience void of offence before the Almighty and before man?—Did this eminent Saint accept a woman for his wife he had not beheld, that he might live with her in unity and godly love, according to God’s holy ordinance? Ask your own hearts, Who are there among you daily imitating in *any degree* this sanctified pattern? Is not the union of most in the present day commenced in Lust, or for purposes gratificatory of the Pride of Life? Oh the forbearance and the patience of God, which will endure for a moment men calling themselves Christians, whose lives and practices are the very counterpart of that of his antient Saints!—Are the beauties of Rebekah unnoticed by the Spirit of God, till she is solicited to become the partner of Isaac? The Christian will disesteem that form or comeliness, the possessor of which is not found in the Path of Righteousness; he

he will not look upon that countenance, nor the height of that Stature, whose owner is equally characterized by an ungracious heart: We know of no amiableness even of Soul which does not originate in Jesus, all else is liable to much fluctuation, is uncertain in its tendency, unless as we are authorized to conclude, it inherits a peculiar disposition to incline us Pharisaically to Self, and by consequence to drive us off from God.

Such amiableness as this, has led some men to stand forth champions for the children of Satan; Saul, through this weak passion of Universal Charity, spared Agag; Ahab commiserated Benhadad; and some Gospel Ministers have succoured the kingdom of Satan in his Popish representatives of mystical Babylon, while another under the colour of furthering the cause of morality, has tamely sat himself down to devise materials, through which, in the form of novels, he might convey sentiments of purity, for the obtainment of which, Christ has taught us to look up to himself alone according to his written word: * We deny not that these men have

* See, or rather *do not see*, two Novels written by the Rev. T. Haweis, of Aldwinckle—the one entitled *SIBERIAN ANECDOTES*, the other, *THE MANSATEEN FAMILY*.

had their several calls to preach the Gospel, but we can produce from multifarious evidence, that they possessed no call to enter into the engagements for which we thus publicly reprove them.

But we conclude—How does almost every action of the primitive Saints appear to have had God for its author, continuer and finisher; how does even a very transient view of them indicate that they were commenced, continued, and concluded in Christ! We affirm not of such men that they were sinless, Scripture has left the reverse upon Record; but enough of sanctity appears in their general deportment, to put those in the present day to the blush, who pretend to cherish an expectation of uniting in glory with these predecessors.

Do you, my brethren, wish to pursue into the mansions of bliss these people of God, who, through Faith and Patience, are reported to have inherited the promises? *Your Faith, and your Patience* must bear a near resemblance and affinity to theirs: Remember *what things* they gave up, and *for what* they gave them up: All which has been spiritually recorded, has been written for your learning, even the feeble efforts of my pen; which,

which, if such become a mean of opening the Scriptures to you, or of aggrandizing your comfortable expectations, let Christ have all the Glory, and your prayers in my behalf.—
AMEN.

SERMON XII.

2 COR. CHAP. XII. VERSE 9.

— MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE.

THE casual Peruser of the words as they stand, will feel in himself no objection to admit them in *one* of their significancies.—Does the Prophet of the Lord secrete himself by the brook Cherith? The Ravens shall become his Caterers! Do the sores of Lazarus need the assistance of a Surgeon? God shall turn Dogs into Doctors! But the mind of the Apostle is directed to an establishment of a truth of more valuable import, a victory over sin through the sufficiency of God's Grace.

By the term Grace we are to understand favour or good will; they are synonymous terms—We are then about to encounter one of the most precious truths of the Divine

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Word,

Word, the Christian's "Anchor of the soul, " sure, and steadfast," that by which he derives his title to the name he bears; for being by Nature a child of wrath, he, by the application of the Spirit of God to his Soul, is constituted a child of Grace.

The Apostle seems to apply the words we have just read to you to those who begin to grow weary and faint in their minds, by reason of those manifold assaults and temptations which they frequently experience from Satan, from their own proper corruptions or other enemies of God: And Paul appears to have laid down the Doctrine conveyed in the text immediately after he had in his own person experienced the benefits of its application; we view him therefore in the light of a Patient, who, being vexed with an infirmity, receives a Sovereign Relief, which, by its valuable effects, he is authorized to recommend to persons similarly affected. This citizen of Tarsus appears more immediately than any other of the Disciples or Apostles to have forwarded the effect of God's Grace to the Christian's notice, and indeed he closes very many of his Epistles with a pious consigning over of those Churches to which he addressed his writings, to the Grace of Jesus Christ. It is marvelous in the present day, that men should take the words into their mouths, which it is to be,

be feared is frequently done, without any peculiar idea affixed to them; in short, that they should adopt them as words of course, devoid of any intrinsic value, or meaning; our Apostle was of a far different opinion — he speaks of it as an all-sufficient quality, as the primary spring of all Religion, the very life and soul itself of genuine piety.

In this behold then, O man, *what*, as well as *who* it is, that maketh thee to differ from another; thou possessest nothing *Spiritually* which can convey a certain earnest to thy Soul, that thou art travelling the way to Heaven and Happiness, which thou canst, with Evangelical authority, attribute to any thing but God's free Grace—*free*, because it is bestowed upon thee unconditionally, without respect to any qualification of thine—*free*, because another paid the Price—that ransom which thou couldst not pay.

If Paul then, in the fury of Satan's assaults, was enabled to repel them by the answer he received to his prayers, and was necessitated to have recourse to prayer for strength to oppose Temptation, thence is made evident the folly of those men, who, not only run into the very face of temptations, but who seek to subdue them by their own strength.

From the words of the text, we are taught in some considerable degree, the Value and Importance of God's Grace, and the absurdity of the Arminian System of Free-Will; we know of some who are accustomed to exclaim, This or the other person might refrain from this or that criminal Indulgence if he would; he might for instance keep himself from Intemperance, anger, and the like, especially as he admits they pray upon his Vitals; believe me, those are best, and only truly kept whom God keeps; we know of several who express a wonder, that this or that man of Talents and Understanding can so forfeit his character, and reduce his estate by one and another disgraceful connection or gratification; we entertain no high opinion of these wondering Christians: David, such will allow, we suppose, to have been a man of no inconsiderable ability, and one highly indulged with the countenance and presence of his God; yet we read that in the decline of his life, when the heat of youthful passions too is allowedly on the decline, he falls into the sin of Adultery, against which one should have thought he possessed a sufficient Antidote, when we take into our account his age, and the abundance of the wives which he was permitted to possess.

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"God be gracious unto thee my Son," was the affectionate and pious exclamation of Joseph to his brother Benjamin; "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" for ever, is the conclusion of most of Paul's Epistles; and till we can prove that Satan is weaker than ourselves, and ceases to be as he is represented, "The strong man armed," it will behove us to be as earnest in our application for Grace, and as sincere in setting a due value upon the possession of it.

Do any of you surpass your neighbours in your lively hopes of a glorious Immortality? It is by God's Grace and favour that you inherit the Expectation. Are you kept from those criminal Indulgences that ruin the Soul, and entail beggary and infamy on the Sinner? If you belong to Christ, it is by his Grace alone that you are restrained from these excesses. Do shame and contrition before God seize upon your spirits in consequence of sin conceived or committed? These are the motions of Grace in the Soul: May you never labour to suppress these admonitions of this your faithful and affectionate friend! Do you hear of any who rush uncalled into their Maker's presence, being assaulted by despair? This only can be attributed to a want of Grace. Some of you who are parents perhaps tell your children you hope God will
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give them Grace; but do you pray that he would bestow this inestimable blessing upon them? Some of you who are children occasionally perhaps repeat the Church Catechism, in which you declare you pray unto God to give you his Grace: Are you hypocrites before him only, or is this the real language of your hearts? Oh if you did but feel its all-sufficiency, and your own inability either to do or to think any thing of yourselves, surely that would compel you to petition for this divine benefit! To deny what has been advanced, what is it but to conceive that the Grace of God is not of that singular import we have described it to be, and to imagine there can exist such a character in the world as a graceless Christian.

“ By Grace are ye saved through faith,” says our Apostle, which is as much as to assert, that whatever faith ye possess, it is by Grace that ye inherit it. And indeed if the Doctrine of Election can stand, the Doctrine of Grace must of course; the one is a very component part of the other; and it may be thus made out: Did Christ die for all? Then the Holy Ghost bestows Grace upon all; and how then can any perish? The answer is, because they are devoid of Grace: He who gives Glory, will most assuredly give Grace; thus David observes, “ The Lord will give
“ Grace

" Grace and Glory !" God who worketh to *will*, worketh also to *do* of his good pleasure, he that begins the good Work, will carry it on to the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ; from whence we may, with Scriptural authority, correct that grand mistake, which characterizes the writings of BUNYAN, and other eminent servants of God who existed in the last Century, who seem to have laboured to inculcate into the minds of their hearers and readers, that it is possible to fall from Grace; we confess that men like David may for a time fall foully but not finally, and we doubt not but the distress of mind such labour under in consequence of their declension is superlatively grievous, so as even to make them cry out there is no hope for them in their God; how comes he then to be denominated *their* God? Faith however may so far decline, and be on the point of expiring, and these characters for a time appear to themselves and to others to be entirely rejected and reprobated; but we cannot find that it is asserted of any character in Scripture, that having once possessed Grace, the estate of such an one became finally hopeless.

Whence we may rebuke that heresy of the Arminians, which asserts, that David was forgiven his criminal Intercourse with Bathsheba,

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in consequence of Repentance; whereas Repentance was but the consequence of Pardon; the blood of Christ purchased pardon for David, previous to David's existence, and Christ *giveth* his sheep eternal Life; it is his Father's good pleasure in him to *give* them the Kingdom: If you demand of the Arminian, whether the procuration of pardon is not by the purchase of the blood of Christ, this they will readily admit; of course then they overthrow their own assertion. If Paul pronounces of certain Galatians, "that they are fallen from Grace," he does not infer, that they were at any time under the influence of it, but that they were simply once enlightened with a general knowledge of the Gospel: This will be better apprehended, by a reference to the 4th verse of the 6th chapter to the Hebrews. — Another error too of the Arminians we will take occasion to glance at in this place; they are peculiarly attached to an adoption of this phrase, We must improve the means of Grace; on the contrary, it is the Grace itself which effects our improvement, and we, as before cited, are *passive* and not *active* in the engagement.

Seeing then the benefits of Grace are so many, and great, it behoves us to enquire at the bar of our Consciences, whether we be constituted partakers of this inestimable treasure,—

sure.—We admit that you can patiently acquiesce that you must be miserable without it, that on your possession of it depends your prospect of Salvation; but if you are already the happy possessors of it, it will teach you to deny ungodliness, to pray against, and to resist it; this language of Joseph, or an equivalent, will intrude itself upon your minds, when in the exercise of Temptation, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? It will move you likewise to the practice of much piety, virtue, and self-denial; in restraining your Soul, you will deem no inconvenience a burthen, for the respect you have to the commands of the Most High; the ways of Religion will to you seem to be the only ways of pleasantness, and you will allow God's commands not to be grievous: When you feel yourself in danger of being fascinated by the baneful charms of sin, your language will be, "Turn away mine eyes, O God, lest I behold Vanity!" The restriction you impose upon yourself, however long and protracted, will, like the Servitude of Jacob, *appear to you but a few days*, for the love you bear to Jesus: It will be your prayer, that you may adorn the Doctrine of Christ your Saviour in all things, and that you may not venture to suppose yourself to be, what in reality you are not—Thus ex-

tensive is the effect of Grace, and even further than we have depicted it to be.

Of the text, we feel ourselves disposed to drop what appears to us to be a remark of very considerable importance; it is observable, that it was the answer not only to prayer, but to fervent prayer; not the mere first teachings of the Spirit of God, but the teachings of the Spirit to one already brought under his power, and fervent in his supplication; "The fervent prayer of the Righteous man availeth much;" This our text then was an answer to fervent prayer, for Paul had been already clad in the Righteousness of Christ; as it availed then to procure him an answer, even an answer of peace, how happy their situation, who are not only enabled to descry the value of Grace, but are from this discovery, or rather Revelation, induced to apply to Jesus with fervency of heart equal to that of the Apostle.

Of the sufficiency of Grace, we possess many remarkable instances previous to the Law given from Mount Sinai; indeed the godly are at no time "under the Law, but under " Grace;" what do you suppose induced two of the Sons of Noah, Shem, and Japhet, to cover the Nakedness of their Father, when as yet

yet the command, "Thou shalt not uncover the Nakedness of thy Father," was not promulgated?—What do you conceive moved Joseph to refuse compliance with the adulterous solicitations of the Wife of Potiphar? Not that mere natural conscience by which Heathens and Infidels are alone guided, but the Grace of God; thus it is recited of Joseph, "The Lord was with him."

"*My Grace is sufficient for thee*"—by consequence then nothing else is sufficient—not my Grace and something else, but individually my Grace; Grace purchased for thee by the sufferings of Jesus; it is *given* to thee graciously; and shall we deem the Death of the Son of God inefficacious? Away then with such idle phrases as, falling from Grace; the Day of Grace is past, and learn to interpret Scripture, if so be you may, not by seizing upon a single expression, but by taking it in the aggregate and general outline, and by comparing "Spiritual things with Spiritual."—Did an Apostle of Christ, one commissioned to preach the Gospel, and to set an example to others, find Sin such a fore and oppressive combatant against him? Who then has an authority to preach up the notion of sinless perfection, the favourite topic of a late Arminian Babbling? Or who shall despair of

* John Wesley.

victory over corruption, who is possessed of faith sufficient to compel him to a Throne of Grace? You could have no mind to pray in faith, unless it were given you of God; so you may evermore prognosticate from this very propensity to petition, the most blessed and gracious answer to your supplications; they may be long continued, but they shall finally be gratified, if so be you are made willing to resign the management and the honour of the issue, to an Almighty Saviour—to be beholden totally to Jesus.

And least you should infer from any of our arguments, that we are anxious to obtrude upon you a System of Antinomianism, we assert that you have no reason to imagine you are a subject of Grace, when you feel no endeavour on your part to forward its monitions; though we have laboured all along to wrest the Crown from the Temples of the Creature, we have by no means attempted to seat the Creature in the Chair of Indolence and Torpidity; but if the Grace of Jesus is all-sufficient, it is of peculiar importance that man be set to work from *gracious* motives; we abhor every other principle as an inducement to activity; “Without me,” says the Saviour, “ye can do nothing;” “Lord increase our faith,” was the Petition of the Disciples, and if Jesus worketh to *will* and to

to *do* of his own good pleasure, if the author and finisher of faith increase your faith, the will, the ability, and the increase, however suspended by your own carnality, must issue in blessedness.

Here then we pause, our last sentence appears to require it, while we suggest the remark, that no one can preach up the Doctrines of free Grace, fully and faithfully, but he shall incur the charge of Antinomianism; yet consider well if *We* at least have held out any just reason for an accusation of such a Satanical intention; have we solicited you to commence in licentiousness, or to continue in profanity? God forbid! It has been the labour of the poor dust before you, to lead you to Jesus, in him you will find no such example or encouragement; as we have not preached ourselves but Christ the Lord, so we have not preached up *Self*, but have aimed that the Lord alone may be exalted: With this sole view, We have lately come among you, and have fed your Souls with such things as we have; may you beware how you reject what has been spiritually delivered for your consolation, and "*make God a lyar*" through your Infidelity—may he bless and accept you in Christ.—AMEN.

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SERMON XIII.

I JOHN CHAP. II. VERSE 20.

— YE HAVE AN UNCTION FROM THE HOLY ONE,
AND YE KNOW ALL THINGS.

WHENEVER Scripture advances any assertion in positive Terms, as in the instance before us, the contrary of such assertion is always supposed to be discountenanced: We therefore infer, that without this Unction, Ye cannot know all things.

The verse we have just read to you obviously proposes the following Doctrine, that an Unction is at least desirable, if not necessary—which we shall prove to be necessary, by propounding what is to be implied by the term, Unction of the Holy One, and that without it ye cannot by consequence apprehend all things necessary to Salvation: Salvation,

vation, you well know, is the subject of both the Old and New Testaments: The word *Unction* will be fully explained by a reference to the 18th verse of the 4th chapter of Luke, in which it is said, that Christ, going into the Synagogue, and standing up to read, opened upon a passage remarkably applicable to himself, and which was contained in the following Words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor;" it follows then that this *Unction* or *anointing*, is an operation from the Spirit of God—Fully possessed that such is the import of our Text, we shall abide by this interpretation and proceed accordingly.

This *Unction* is elsewhere in Scripture denominated, the Spirit of Truth, and under that description it is promised by our Lord to his Disciples in the close of the 15th chapter of the Gospel of John, and again in the 16th as follows: "When the Spirit of Truth shall come, he shall guide you into all Truth:" Without this Spirit, the Apostle to the Corinthians observes, no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, that is, no man can say it with full confession and hearty acquiescence, being willing and desirous that Jesus should reign over him, and in him. To this Spirit, the Apostle just quoted, attributes

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the knowledge of the word of Wisdom, the working of all miracles, prophecy, and the interpretation of tongues; arguing that "all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

By what we have advanced, we trust we have proved the possession of this Spirit to be not only desirable, but necessary, seeing that we cannot apprehend to any saving purpose the Doctrines of Salvation independently of it. How greatly then are those to be blamed and withstood to the face, who contend that human learning is an indispensable pre-requisite to a right intelligence of the sacred Scriptures; how do they undervalue the instruction of the Spirit, and bar the gate of Heaven against the simple and unlettered; surely such declarations can result only from a desire of forwarding some favourite System, a wish to be led high in men's esteem, on account of the possession of rare Talents, or from some equally selfish cause.

Is it contended, that Peter argued that the "unlearned and unstable wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction?" Be it remembered he had no allusion to human arts or sciences, but to an acquaintance with the word

word of God; which interpretation is made evident by the addition of the term *unstable*. And here we cannot avoid expressing our astonishment at that ungospelled provision originally tolerated in our own Church, which admits those who are incapable of framing a Discourse of their own, to read an Homily to their Congregation: With what authority can men thus stupidly ignorant, profess in the Language of our Ordination Service, that they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon them the Office of a Pastor of Christ's flock? And how can these be said to be teachers of others, who are clearly only learners themselves? Men of this description surely can be considered only as pillorying themselves when they occupy a Christian Pulpit. Indeed of such importance does God esteem the acknowledgement of the Teaching of his Spirit to be, that he has in every age, since the establishment of our National Church, provided that the most serviceable of his Ministers, should not be members of such Church; BUNYAN was the Christian Hero of the last Century, and we have his equal, if not his superior, in the present, among the very foremost rank of Dissenters from us; we mean MR. HUNTINGTON; not that we here labour to decry our Establishment, we simply argue, that since such Establishment invariably implies, that the Minister of it is supplied with a

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certain fund of human Learning, God has taken this method to confute a notion thus idle, and unproveable from the inspired writings, and to preserve the assistance of the Spirit in esteem among mankind.

But some of the lettered tribe will be ready to exclaim on the present occasion, that the Extemporary Discourses of the men to whom we allude, are the effect only of habit, of exercise, and of a tenacious memory—Alas! how do these learned argumentators forfeit their understanding in the pursuit of reason, and become philosophically deprived of their senses; that Spirit of God which originally moved upon the Face of the Waters, is daily and hourly supplying his faithful Ones with water from the well of Life; in his hands are the hearts of all men, and as he is the *Maker* of the Spirit, so also is he the *Spirit Taker*, the *captivator* and *subduer* of it.

As the Holy Ghost is to lead us into all Truth, so is it no less his office to instruct us in prayer; God hath said, “I will pour upon the house of David, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem a Spirit of Prayer and of Supplications,” and in full conformity to this declaration, Paul affirms, that “We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us

“ us with groanings which cannot be uttered;” by consequence, all prayer, independent of this holy inspiration, is no better than Babbling: If we thought it justifiable to quote the productions of men on these occasions, we might support our arguments by quotations from our Liturgy, which comprehends prayers, of which the following are component parts, “ Make us to ask such things as shall please Thee:” “ Mercifully grant that by thy Holy Inspiration we may think those things which be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same.”—But we must deduce *our* arguments from the Records of Eternal Truth.

“ The natural man receiveth not the things which be of God;” nay further, reasons the Apostle, “ neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,” “ the carnal mind is enmity against God:” In conformity to which, and in close correspondence with the Text, he adds, that, “ he that is *spiritual* discerneth all things:” Now the very opposition which sentiments of this nature meet with from the wisdom of this World, is the strongest proof of their veracity; were the matter of an unspiritual complexion confined simply to the concerns of this Life, sentiments worded with equal force and strength, would be literally admitted;

but it is only through the Spirit's assistance, that we are enabled to "search all things," and by his assistance we are empowered to investigate "*the hidden things of God.*"

We doubt not, from a review of what has been delivered to you, that a Scholastic Education is a snare of the Devil, by which many are taken off from a contemplation of the inspired writings, and are induced to compare Scripture with the labours of Pagan Poets and Philosophers, rather than to "compare Spiritual things with Spiritual." Will the obscene productions of Theocritus, Anacreon, and Aristophanes; of Catullus, Ovid, and Terence, or even the more chaste flights of an Homer, or a Virgil, tend to possess men with a knowledge of the plague of their own hearts? Can such Authors be instrumental to introduce you to an acquaintance with that, of which they themselves appear to have had no idea? You will argue perhaps, that Paul in his Epistles has quoted from such performances; let it be remembered he, in *one* instance, addresses those who were ignorant of any superior production (refer to Acts xvii. 28), and in *no* instance recommends the perusal of similar writings; for he himself confesses, he "neither received "the Gospel of man, neither was he taught, "but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

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and we trust a time is hastening on, when
 "the Earth shall be filled with the Know-
 ledge of the Lord," and that we have the
 Authority of God's Spirit to assert, that the
 loftiness of Worldly Wisdom shall soon be
 brought low, and the Impatient Critic be
 heard no more.

We have yet further reason to adduce,
 whereby we may prove the necessity of the
 Spirit's teaching—"If flesh and blood cannot
 inherit the Kingdom of God," but must
 be born again for that purpose, we see not
 how Infants can be saved, without a com-
 munication of that Spirit, before they go
 hence, whose design it is to take of the
 things of Christ, and shew them to his own
 people; we do not contend that all Infants
 perish—no, we doubt not many are saved,
 doubtless God deals with them according to
 the general tenor of the Gospel; many babes
 perished by the Universal Deluge, many in
 Sodom, many with Dathan and Abiram, and
 forty and two were torn to pieces who pro-
 fanely mocked Elisha; hence may you who
 are in expectation of becoming Parents, learn,
 like Rebecca, the necessity of commending the
 fruit of your loins to God, as soon as it is
 conceived in the Womb—But to return.—

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Since you will find it difficult to deny, that Infants are thus Spiritually instructed, as we have represented, so we hesitate not to affirm, that many who are arrived to years of maturity in the *present day*, when the Spirit has been striving with them, have, through its blessed influence, repeated portions from the Word of God, which they have had no opportunity of previously perusing; what can it be, which, when the mind is under any peculiar doubt and anxiety, suddenly darts in upon it a passage from Holy Writ, which not only subdues the tumult of the Soul, but serves to the outward man as a directory how to proceed? What is it which maintains that general uniformity respecting the grand essentials of the Christian Faith among God's gracious Servants, but that Spirit which first promulgated the truths of Revelation? Hence then it will follow, that those who are not taught, nor led by the same Spirit, have no authority to commence teachers from either Pulpit or Prefs: It is not denied, that many may arrive at a knowledge of the Gospel by a mere literal acquaintance with the System, but this is not the knowledge which the Word of God recommends—no, they only who are led by the Spirit of God are ranked with the Sons of God, and “hereby we know “ that we are his, by his Spirit which he “ hath given us;” hence we infer, that though
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practice pre-supposes knowledge, yet knowledge does not imply practice; I labour for instance under a violent tooth-ach, and I know extraction will free me from the malady, but this knowledge will by no mean induce me with courage to submit to the operation; thus we see knowledge may singly of itself introduce hatred against the thing known; this is the language of our Saviour, "if ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them."

To evidence in how little esteem the instruction of God's blessed Spirit is held, we quote only the common fashionable exclamation, ejaculated by men who take up a Volume of Theology, Does it, say they, comprehend any thing New? If it did in the sense they affix to the question, it must be simply of human invention; What says Paul to the Galatians? "Though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Perhaps you will quote against me the words of Jesus, "Every Scribe instructed into the Kingdom of Heaven is like an householder bringing out of his Treasure things New and Old;" be it observed, if such things be New, they are New only to those who were previously unacquainted with them, New to their producer himself,

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in that he was primarily in a *carual, unspiritual* state; so that at the same time he produces these things denominated *New*, they are yet as *Old* as the Everlasting Gospel; individually at the same time both *New* and *Old*, as we have explicated the objection: The Athenians are reprehended in the Acts of the Apostles for their curiosity after Novelty, which unwarrantable disposition appears from the 17th chapter to have extended itself to the strangers which resided at Athens, so that we have sufficient reason to suspect those who are thus avarititious after Novelty, to belong to the University of Aristotle, or at least to that of human reason, rather than to the School of Jesus. The grand request then should not be, Who will shew us any thing *New*, but, "Who will shew us any Good?" David having brought forward the Query, adjoins, both by way of Prayer and Answer, "Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!" Plainly indicating from whence the source of all desirable information is to be derived.

Thus we apprehend God the Father has his more immediate office of creating us, the Son of redeeming us, and the Holy Ghost that of bestowing upon the redeemed every qualification pre-requisite to their entrance into Glory; we speak only of Spiritual acquirements

ments and indulgences; for temporalities, we doubt not but even the Reprobate are indebted to the entire Trinity of the Godhead; but for the purpose of elucidating the Text, we are compelled in a Gospel contemplation of our subject, to ascribe to every character of the Godhead, his peculiar and appropriated engagement in the Work of Redemption.

If in the phrase of Scripture, one criterion by which we are to know God to be our God, is by his "living and walking" in us, we infer that neither Faith, which is a term for knowledge, nor practice, can be acceptable to God, of which Faith or Knowledge he is not the Author, and to which practice he is not the Instigator; inasmuch as the Scriptures aver, that the Children of God, "are led by the Spirit of God." And it will now perhaps be a task of some difficulty to your Preacher to evade the charge of spiritual Pride; let it be observed however, Pride is no offspring of the Spirit, such sensations are totally unspiritual, of a nature Pharisaical and Devilish: Instead then of comparing our knowledge or accomplishments with those of our fellow mortals, it will be a better procedure to compare them with those qualities, which Angels and the Spirits of just men made perfect enjoy in their glorified Estate;

Z

for

for what have we, any more than they, which we have not received?

Do you, my hearers, enjoy this Unction from the Holy One; may you be content then with what is revealed to you by it, and cease from curious investigations; remember there is somewhat which even *the Angels* cannot fathom, into which *they* are desirous to look; *they* have not yet, nor will you on this side the decisive day, be permitted to penetrate the mystery; perhaps it will continue the subject of contemplation and praise throughout the boundless ages of Eternity; we mean the Mystery of God manifested in the flesh. But if you possess that Spiritual Information, without which you are uncertified that you are of the Elect, you will be frequently pouring out your Soul in praise for what you have received, and in prayer for further gracious communications; you will strive against sin, arguing with Paul, " Shall I take the members of Christ and make them the members of an Harlot?" under the gosselled conviction, that " your bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost." Feeling yourselves by the Death of Christ dead to sin, at the knowledge of which you could not arrive but by spiritual communication, you will argue with yourselves, How can we live willingly any longer in sin? Apprehending that unless ye
not

not only mortify, but “mortify *through the Spirit*,
 “the deeds of the body,” ye cannot *spiritually*
 live; and knowing that you are risen with
 Christ, from the same gracious quarter, you
 will “seek those things which are above,
 “where Christ sitteth at the right hand of
 “God!”—To whom with Jesus, and this
 same “Holy One,” be given all Glory ever-
 lastingly!

SERMON XIV.

REVELATION, CHAP. i. VERSE 8.

I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND
THE ENDING, SAITH THE LORD—

WHO is intended by this Alpha and Omega, is sufficiently apparent by a recurrence to the verse preceding, which plainly indicates it can be spoken of none other than Jesus Christ; each several of our addresses to you we hope has favoured of this same Jesus, and we must confess we now feel ourselves, in some degree, in the situation of that Lover, who, having sat long in the company of his mistress, feels himself the more disinclined to separate from the beloved Object.

What is imported by the Alpha and Omega, is sufficiently explicated by the continuation of the Text, and is solved by the Phrases, the beginning,

beginning, and the ending, the one comprising the first, and the other the last character in the Greek Alphabet; the Apocalypse or book of Revelation was written in Greek, hence appears the propriety of their Adoption. By the opening of the Words we have just read, St. John seems to have carefully guarded against the Socinian and Arian heresies, against which he seems to have levied much of the force of those Arguments contained in his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word," seems to be correspondent with the passage under our present consideration; thus the Apostle to the Colossians styles Christ, "the first-born of every creature, the image of the invisible God, for by him were all things created, in heaven, and in earth, things visible, and invisible; he is before all things, and by him all things consist." "Thou, Lord," says God the Spirit, speaking of the Son, "in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands." Our blessed Lord makes an observation to his Disciple Philip, which exceedingly corroborates this Doctrine; He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also! Again, as he is styled the head of the body the Church, so is he denominated the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth up unto an holy temple in the Lord.

Thus

Thus then as he is the Creator, he is also to be respected as the Regenerator; man having lost, through the transgression of the first Adam, the Image of God, if created anew unto good works, must be renewed of necessity in Christ Jesus; for without me, he exclaims, ye can *do* nothing; as he created us *naturally*, so if we possess any *spiritual* life, he is no less the Author of that; thus he is stiled the Author of our Faith; he who made us *men*, can alone constitute us *Saints*.

Light is a very early requisite in creation, and Christ holds forth himself, in a Spiritual Signification, as the Light of the World; he is described as being "eyes to the blind;" thus Bartimeus must be illuminated by Jesus, before he can follow him *in the way*. Is persecuting and injurious Paul to be subdued to the confession of Gospel Truth, Jesus must arrest his violence; it is the declaration of Christ, No man cometh to the Father but by me; and thus sings the Spouse in the Canticles, "Draw me, we will run after thee!" — Abraham must have a revelation from the Lord Jesus, before the Patriarch can know Christ to be "his shield and exceeding great reward;" that the Personage who appeared to this eminent servant of God, was none other than the Son of God, is hence provable, no man, saith the Scripture, hath seen God, meaning

meaning the Father, at any Time; thus Moses, when the Lord passes by him in his glory, is to be hidden in the clift of the rock, because no man can see God the Father and live.

Now should we, according to some, take these words addressed to the Ephesians, "God hath created all things by Jesus Christ," as referential simply to their renewal, rather than their primary production, one main point at least which we wish to prove is established by this interpretation of them; yet the opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews, evidently refers to the primary creation of all things, as well as to their upholding and maintenance by Christ Jesus.

But he is likewise in another sense the Alpha, being the first-born from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept; so that in him, they who are his, enjoy not only a resurrection to spiritual life here, but an earnest expectation of a resurrection to life eternal hereafter: he it is who is to make the vile body of his Saints, like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself: It should seem then a sort of paradox, that he should be enabled to subdue all things to himself, if he were unconcerned in their original production.

It

It is by him alone that men have access to the Father, not only for spiritual, but for temporal blessings, as is evident from his answer to the prayer of Abraham in behalf of Ishmael: Now if Christ be not God, he could not have existed from Eternity before the foundation of the World; for the Hosts of Angels were not eternal, though they are everlasting; but our Lord speaks of a Glory which he enjoyed with the Father before the World was.

We trust we have incontestibly established the first clause we had to speak to; it remains that we pass on to the second, and apply them both to our consciences—I am Omega, says Christ: He is described as the *finisher* of your Faith by the Apostle; he is likewise “the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth;” “when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law:” God the Father hath put all things under the feet of the Son, and it is his province to destroy Death, the last enemy, so that he himself surviving this last enemy, may in that acceptation be deemed Omega, or ending: And thus wrapt into future times, the Prophet anticipating one of the offices of Christ, breaks out, “O Death,
“ I will

"I will be thy plagues!" And that we may not remain ignorant of the extensive importance of Jesus, either as Creator, Renewer, Law-fulfiller, or the like, the words we have affixed to our discourse, occur no less than four times in the course of that book of Scripture from whence we have quoted them.

If "of him bear all the Prophets witness;" if the ritual and ceremonial Law was but a Type and Shadow of the Advent of Jesus, as Paul observes to the Hebrews, so that he is acknowledgedly the Alpha; that he is the Omega or ending likewise, appears to be a natural consequence.

Christ then is proposed as the ultimatum of the Gospel, *the Ending*; we hence may take occasion to observe, that he is the last object, generally speaking, men discover or apply to: indeed of themselves they have no power to commence this application, and it is very rarely, till they have tried each several method, that they are brought to submit to Christ's terms of Salvation; the Woman had spent all her living upon other Physicians, before she had recourse to the Physician of Gilead; and were some of you lying down upon beds of sickness, and languishing, and ready to ejaculate your last gasp, we doubt not but you would be ready to comply with this provisory

A a

Salvation;

Salvation; why then are you so backward in coming to him *now* that you may have life, that you may enjoy the knowledge and earnest of your Salvation by the remission of your Sins? Of this importance is the person of Christ to every believer, he is "all his Salvation, and all his desire," "he has none in Heaven but him," "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for his people," "nor is there any upon earth whom he desires before him."

Do you admit then that Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God ever interceding for his redeemed? You must then allow him to be the Omega, or ending, because this his engagement shall not determine, till all his Saints from the four Quarters of the Globe shall be called into Gospel Liberty; his office commenced as a Redeemer with the Election of his chosen, and will continue as a Mediator, till time shall be no more; but even then he shall not cease to be contemplated as the Alpha and Omega of the Christian's eternal triumph, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" — "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created!"

And

And now, sirs, what think you of this Jesus? Have we not cause to suspect of some of you, that he is not in all your thoughts? David professes to "remember him upon his bed," and to meditate on him in the night watches." In this sense he was the Omega of David's thoughts; but was he not the Alpha too? "Thou art my God," he sings, "early will I seek thee!" "When I awake I am still with thee!" Jesus was the sole provision made for man in his extremity, and should be the first and last subject of the Christian's contemplation: from whence we may authoritatively reprove those, who are for ever recurring to their own deeds, or to the Law, for the purposes either of accusing, or else of excusing themselves; we know of no condemnation to those who are *in* Christ Jesus, nor of any justification *out* of him; look unto him, *him* only, and be ye saved all ye ends of the World; the converse is, dare to look either unto yourselves, or unto the Law, and ye will eventually perish; you contradict the authority of God in his Gospel—by such proceeding, you undervalue what Christ has done and suffered: "As many as are of the works of the Law, are under the Curse."

We know none of you are willing to come to Jesus, till you feel yourselves hopeless and "ready to perish" without him; it is the

interest of Satan to beat you off from this hold; and unhappily for you, your own natural blindness and corruption do but too easily second his attempts; as yet you cannot feel how it is possible you can be interested in a transaction performed by another centuries before you came into being, and in a Nature similar, yet superior to your own: the sacred Scriptures no where invite you to set reason to work upon the subject, but implicitly to acquiesce in the proposals they exhibit; "there is none other name whereby ye can be saved, save only in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ;" not that the bare name can save you, any more than the dead Popish adoration of the Crucifix; it is hereby alone we know that we belong to Jesus, by the pardon of our sins, which he has sealed to us by his Spirit.

Do we feel ourselves harrassed by corruptions? we must look unto Jesus spiritually, with the eye of faith; God has given us already, if he has sealed our pardon to us, a full earnest of his Love, and how shall he not with his Son "*freely* give us all things?" He gave the one *freely*, and he will not suffer us to *purchase* the other.

Man once incapacitated by Sin, God, to testify his love towards him, provides him a Saviour,

Saviour, through whom he might have access to the offended Deity, and come boldly to a throne of Grace; from whence Christ is called the new and living Way, the living Stone, made the chief stone of the corner; he is likewise stiled the Foundation, "other foundation can no man lay, save that which is laid Christ Jesus;" he is elsewhere also spoken of as the first fruits; so that Christ being the first fruits from the grave, they who are Christ's "shall be raised first" at his second coming, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Thus then are we who are Christians, uniformly interested in Jesus, since the only claim we have upon God for heaven and happiness is this, that Christ is God's.

Are there none present to whom this doctrine appears to be some new and strange matter, alas we feel seriously for them: There were at no time more than two ways revealed whereby men might enjoy the presence of God: By a perfect continuance in well doing was one of them, but then this led no higher than to a terrestrial Paradise, forfeited as soon as enjoyed by our carnal head Adam; the other by the death and merits of the Saviour, who, being the Lord from Heaven, his purchase, like himself, must be Celestial. Hence then is
 apparent

apparent the propriety of terming *Eternal Life a Gift through Jesus Christ*, and not a *reward*, which should repress the unauthorized courage of those who have set themselves to work for the procurement of Salvation, and should become an handmaid of comfort to those, who have a view of their own nothingness, and spiritual deformity; the Kingdom of Grace is the Lord's, and he giveth it to whomsoever he will; it is God the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom; and Christ called unto him whomsoever he willed, not for works of Righteousness which they had done—no, for he called the Children of Israel, as the Prophet tells them, for no recommendation which they possessed in superiority over others—no, for they were a stiff-necked people: He called the thief upon the cross, who probably too was an accomplice with Barabbas in Murder; he called Paul, who was at that instant breathing out threats against the servants of Jesus, and who already had been an accomplice in the murder of Stephen; he was pleased likewise to call the Philippian Jailor; and that at the moment he was about to break the sixth commandment, and if any of you have been brought to an happy experience of Gospel Truth, you can bear testimony to the above, by a confession that he called *you* likewise, and that, saving only for his love to your Souls, you can descry no reason

son wherefore he should not long ago have executed vengeance upon you.

We trust enough has been said, if God shall please to second it with his blessing, to hold forth a word of encouragement to the vilest sinner before us; we address such in the words of Paul to the keeper of the prison, "Believe only in the Lord Jesus Christ;" this is the first and last requisite; those good works which are to be testificatory of your conversion, will ever flow out from a right belief, without them, belief is but notion and fancy; for by faith is implied, a junction and union of the Soul to the Saviour, therefore says the Spirit by Paul, shall I take the members of Christ and make them the members of an Harlot? God forbid!

Do you deny our assertions? You might as well argue, that feeding the courser well with corn would disqualify him for his journey; saving-faith in Jesus inherits naturally as forcible an impulse to propel, or lead the possessor of it to the practice of holiness, as the food we eat has a natural tendency to support animal Life; thus argues the Prophet Isaiah, "Surely shall we say, In the Lord have we Righteousness *and strength*;" "to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed;" "In
" the

“ the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.” The Apostle asserts that “ Christ giveth us both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure;” and, “ out of his fulness we are to receive grace for grace,” as it is elsewhere expressed, “ Grace to help in time of need;” for if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; and if he apprehends him, such man is first apprehended of him; for God saveth *his* by faith, that it may be by Grace; by Grace, or favour, are ye saved through Faith.

Seeing then these qualifications, whereby we receive the knowledge of our Salvation in Christ, are not naturally implanted in us, that so the carnal man can believe if he pleases, we derive just authority from *reason* to refer their origin to a superior power; and, blessed be God, by *Revelation* we have ample occasion to attribute their obtainment even to Jesus the *Author* and *Finisher* of our Faith: Thus then, by the Christian, Christ may be truly contemplated in three views, as a Prophet, a Priest, and a King: As a Prophet, because till he opens the Disciples eyes, they cannot understand the Scriptures; Prophecy has an immediate reference to Christ, as saith John, “ The Testimony of Jesus is the “ Spirit of Prophecy.” As a Priest, it is the office of the Priest to make an atonement for the Sins of the People; Jesus is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; “ by one
“ offering

“ offering of himself, he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified.” As a king, he is a governor among his people; the office of king lasts with the life of the monarch—so “ he shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.” As for those his enemies who will not that he should reign over them, he will command them to be brought and slain before him.

And finally, he is described at one and the same time, to be the *Root* and the *Offspring* of David; nor can we open a single page in the inspired writings, which bears not an immediate reference to Christ: by consequence then, they who are setting up any other recommendation as a title to Heaven, are rendering as far as they may, the whole System of Revelation useless, and are barring the door of eternal happiness against themselves.—According then as it is written, and as we have preached—

LET HIM THAT GLORIETH, GLORY IN THE LORD.

CONCLUSION.

I have for some time preached to you, according to that fidelity with which we have been endowed, Christ, who, in every constituted Christian, is alone "formed the hope of glory;" that this has not been executed with that vigor it might have been, we readily admit; faint as the colours may at times have presented themselves, in which we were enabled to depict the Christian's Salvation, have you not really been enabled to descry somewhat more than a resemblance and congruity between our labours and the exertions of the primitive Apostles of Jesus? Have we not, in few instances at least, evidenced that there is an affinity existing between their Doctrines, and these we have upheld?

You are aware very many of you how these few pages we have read to you are purposed to be disposed of, and we trust you will acquit us of any ungospelled intention in making them public, when we do assure you, that to procure a temporary provision for a numerous family, is our inducement; and since you are aware they do in some degree favour of "that name, which is above every name;" which, in the strong language of one of the most elegant books of Scripture, is recited to be, "as Ointment poured forth:" Sheltering ourselves,

selves, as it were, " under the shadow of his
 " wings," we began, we proceeded, and we
 now ended in Jesus; he was our ALPHA, and
 is now our OMEGA; and we should deem it
 an occasion for much pious Exultation and
 Thankfulness, if, as it is fabled of the Swan,
 our last Song should be denominated *the*
sweetest.

The child shall sit in purple train,
 The Christian Porting

III.

Not thence of thund'ring loves and lusts,
 Of passions lost and won;

But Death, rebellion, and Hell's insubdu-

By God's victorious Son;

S I N I F

And let the land to the impact

One ray of Gospel light.

His march I'll trumpet forth by day,

And tell thereof by night.

V.

As long then as I draw my breath,

Be this petition mine,

" To take my spirit at my death,

" In thy LORD, give me repose."

* It is the Author's intention in the course of some months
 to publish a new, Edition of *Stanzas*, and other Poetical
 Pieces of a religious tendency, of which the above is a
 new—The present Work he not grudge their day—
 a separate Edition, and we presume the Christian will not
 Grudge say that for one of the days of their
 Terms of Subscription as 6d.

AN HYMN.*

The meanest son of Pagan lore,
 Invoking fabled Muse,
 Adventures boldly on his theme,
 Nor will the task refuse;
 But if God's Grace to Gospel truth,
 The minds of mortals bring,
 The child shall lisp in purest strain,
 The Christian Poet sing,

III.

Not themes of shameful loves and lusts,
 Of battles lost and won,
 But Death repell'd, and Hell subdu'd,
 By God's victorious Son:

IV.

And let the same to me impart
 One ray of Gospel light,
 His truth I'll trumpet forth by day,
 And rest thereon by night.

V.

As long then as I draw my breath,
 Be this petition mine,
 "To take my spirit at my death,
 "In life, LORD, give me thine!"

* It is the Author's intention in the course of some months,
 to publish a 12mo. Edition of Hymns, and other Poetical
 Pieces of a serious tendency, of which *the above* is a *Speci-*
men.—The *profane World* do not grudge their *half-penny* for
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